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THE COURTIER

(*IL CORTEGIANO*)

BY

BALDASSARE CASTIGLIONE

TRANSLATED BY THOMAS HOBY

THE NATIONAL ALUMNI

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INTRODUCTION

THE author of *The Courtier,* Baldassare Castiglione, was born in Casatico, near Mantua, Italy, December 6, 1478. His father was a captain of troops that served the Marquis of Mantua; his mother was related to the Marquis and also to the Duchess of Urbino, who figures in this famous book. The boy was educated first at home by his mother, and afterward under eminent masters in Milan. At the age of twenty-one he entered upon military service, and was in the battle of Garigliano. A little later he transferred his services to Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino, and he participated in the capture of Bologna in 1511. In the palace of the Duke he found a firm friend in the Duchess, made the acquaintance of many eminent professional men, and was appointed to diplomatic offices. In 1506 he was sent to the court of King Henry VII in London, and the next year to Louis XII at Milan. In the intervals between devising entertainments for the court at Urbino, he cultivated literature, writing Latin and Italian poems, some of them in collaboration with Cesare Gonzaga, who is one of the speakers in his book. Here in 1508—the year that Duke Guidobaldo died—he began the composition of *The Courtier,* which was completed in 1516. It was first printed in 1528, four years before the publication of Machiavelli's *The Prince,* with which it is classed. In the interval it had been circulated, in fragments, in manuscript, and Castiglione thus sets forth in a letter

dedicating the book to the Bishop of Viseo, his reason for publishing it: "At such time as I was in Spain, being advertised from Italy that the Lady Vittoria Colonna, Marquess of Pescara, unto whom aforetime I had granted a copy of this book, contrary to her promise had made a great part of it to be copied out, it grieved me somewhat, whether I would or no, standing in doubt of the sundry inconveniences that in like cases may happen. Yet had I a hope that the wit and wisdom of that Lady—whose troth I have always had in reverence, as a matter from above—was sufficient to provide that my being obedient to her commandment should not be harmful unto me. At last I had an inkling that part of the book was rife in Naples in many men's hands; and as men are always desirous of novelty, it was thought they attempted to print it. Therefore I, amazed at this mischance, determined with myself to overlook by and by that little in the book that time served me thereto, with intent to set it abroad, thinking it less hurtful to have it somewhat corrected with my own hand than much mangled with another man's. Therefore, to have this my purpose take effect, I took in hand to read it over afresh; and suddenly at the first blush, by reason of the title, I took no little grief, which as I proceeded increased much more as I remembered that the greater part of them that are brought in to reason are now dead. But the thing that should not be rehearsed without tears is, that the Duchess also is dead. And if my mind be troubled with the loss of so many friends and good Lords of mine that have left me in this life, as it were in a wilderness full of sorrow, reason says it should with much more grief bear the heaviness of the Duchess's death than of all the rest, and I was much more

bound unto her than unto all the rest. Therefore, for losing time to bestow that of duty which I ought upon the memory of so excellent a lady, and of the rest that are no more in life, provoked also by the jeopardy of the book, I have caused it to be imprinted and set forth in such sort as the shortness of time hath served me."

Concerning the language and plan of the book he says: "I believe it should not be imputed to me for an error that I have chosen to make myself known for a Lombard, in speaking Lombard, rather than for no Tuscan in speaking too much Tuscan. For I will not do as Theophrastus did, who by speaking too much the mere Athenian tongue was by a simple old woman known not to be of Athens. I believe it is forbidden to no man to write and speak in his own tongue; neither is any man bound to read or hear that which contenteth him not. Therefore if they will not read my *Courtier* they shall offend me not at all. Others say, because it is impossible to find a man of such perfection as I would have the Courtier to be, it is superfluous to write it and teach that which can not be learned. To these I answer that I am content to err with Plato, Xenophon, and Cicero. As they conceived the idea of a perfect Commonwealth, a perfect King, and a perfect Orator, so also may we conceive of a perfect Courtier; the image whereof if my power could not draw nigh in style, so much the less pains shall Courtiers have to draw nigh to the end and mark that I have set before them. Let mine accusers content themselves with the judgment of Time, which at last discovereth the privy faults of everything, and because it is father to truth, and a Judge without passion, it is accustomed evermore to pronounce true sentence of the life or death of writings."

The Courtier has appeared in a hundred and forty editions, in several languages. It was translated into English first by Thomas Hoby, in 1561 (second edition, 1577), then by Robert Samber in 1724, and by A. P. Castiglione in 1727. For this edition we have used Hoby's version, changing his spelling to modern form, for the ease of the reader, but retaining all his quaintness of diction, which so admirably suits the subject and its treatment in the original. Dr. Samuel Johnson is reported by Boswell as saying: "The best book that ever was written upon good breeding, *Il Cortegiano,* by Castiglione, grew up at the little court of Urbino, and you should read it."

Castiglione married a daughter of Count Guido Torello di Montechiarugolo (who died in 1520, to his great sorrow), lived for a time in Venice, then entered the service of Federigo, Marquis of Mantua, and was sent as ambassador to Rome. Later he went as the Pope's nuncio to Madrid, remaining as such till the sack of Rome in 1527, but was able to accomplish nothing at that dishonest court. This courtier, diplomatist, soldier and author died in Toledo, February 7, 1529, and had a magnificent funeral—which could hardly atone for the unhappiness of his last years. Two volumes of his letters were published at Padua in 1771.

R. J.

BOOK FIRST

I HAVE a long time doubted with myself, most loving Messer Alfonso, which of the two were harder for me, either to deny you the thing that you have with such insistence many times asked of me, or to take it in hand; because on the one side methought it a very hard matter to deny anything, especially the request being honest, to the person whom I love dearly, and of whom I perceive myself dearly beloved. Again, on the other side, to undertake an enterprise which I do not know myself able to bring to an end, I judged it uncomely for him that weigheth due reproofs so much as they ought to be weighed.

At length, after much debating, I have determined to prove in this behalf what aid that affection and great desire to please can bring unto my diligence, which in other things is wont to increase the labor of men. You then require me to write what is, to my thinking, the trade and manner of Courtiers, which is most fitting for a gentleman that liveth in the court of princes, by the which he may have the knowledge how to serve them perfectly in every reasonable matter, and obtain thereby favor of them and praise of other men. Finally, of what sort he ought to be that deserveth to be called so perfect a Courtier that there be no want in him. Wherefore I, considering this kind of request, say, that in case it should not appear to myself a greater blame to have you esteem me to be of small friendship, than all other men of little wisdom, I would have rid my hands of this

labor, for fear lest I should be counted rash of all such as know what a hard matter it is, among such diversity of manners that are used in the courts of Christendom, to pick out the perfectest trade and way, and, as it were, the flower of this courtiership. Because use maketh us many time to delight in, and to set little by, the selfsame things; whereby sometime it proceedeth that manners, garments, customs, and fashions which at some time have been in price, become not regarded, and contrariwise the not-regarded become of price. Therefore it is manifestly to be discerned, that use hath greater force than reason to bring up new inventions among us, and to abolish the old, of the which whoso goeth about to judge the perfection is oftentimes deceived.

For which consideration, perceiving this and many other lets in the matter propounded for me to write upon, I am constrained to make a piece of an excuse, and to opine plainly that this error, if it may be termed an error, is common to us both, that if any blame happen to me about it, it may be also partnered with you. For it ought to be reckoned a no less offense in you to lay upon me a burden that passeth my strength, than in me to take it upon me. Let us, therefore, at length settle ourselves to begin that is our purpose and drift, and, if it be possible, let us fashion such a Courtier as the Prince that shall be worthy to have him in his service, although his state be but small, may notwithstanding be called a mighty Lord.

We will not in these books follow any certain order or rule of appointed precepts, the which for the most part is wont to be observed in the teaching of anything, whatsoever it be; but, after the manner of men of old-time, renewing a grateful memory, we will repeat certain

reasonings that were debated in times past between men very excellent for that purpose. And although I was not there present, but at the time when they were debated it was my chance to be in England, yet soon after my return I heard them of a person that faithfully reported them unto me. And I will endeavor myself, for so much as my memory will serve me, to call them particularly to remembrance, that you may see what men worthy great commendation, and unto whose judgment a man may in every point give an undoubted credit, have judged and believed in this matter. Neither shall we swerve from the purpose to arrive in good order at the end unto the which all our communication is directed, if we disclose the cause of the reasonings that hereinafter follow.

As every man knoweth, the little city of Urbino is situated upon the side of the Apennine, in a manner, in the middle of Italy toward the Gulf of Venice. The which for all it is placed among hills, and those not so pleasant as perhaps some other that we behold in many places, yet in this point the element hath been favorable unto it, that all about the country is very plentiful and full of fruits; so that, besides the wholesomeness of air, it is very abundant and stored with all things necessary for the life of man. But among the greatest felicities that men can reckon it to have, I count this the chief, that now a long time it hath always been governed with very good princes, although in the common calamities of the wars of Italy it remained also a season without any at all.

But, without searching further of this, we may make a good proof with the famous memory of Duke Federico, who in his days was the light of Italy. Neither do we

want true and very large testimonies yet remaining of his wisdom, courtesy, justice, liberality, of his invincible courage and policy of war. And of this do his so many victories make proof, chiefly his conquering of places impregnable, his sudden readiness in setting forward to give battle, his putting to flight sundry times, with a small number, very great and puissant armies, and never sustaining loss in any conflict; so that we may, not without cause, compare him to many famous men of old time. This man, among his other deeds praiseworthy, in the hard and sharp situation of Urbino built a palace, to the opinion of many men the fairest that was to be found in all Italy, and so furnished it with every necessary implement belonging thereto that it appeared not a palace, but a city in form of a palace, and that not only with ordinary matters, as silver plate, hangings for chambers of very rich cloth of gold, of silk and other like, but also for sightliness; and, to deck it out withal, placed there a wondrous number of ancient images of marble and metal, very excellent paintings, and instruments of music of all sorts, and nothing would he have there but what was most rare and excellent.

To this, with very great charges, he gathered a great number of most excellent and rare books, in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, the which all he garnished with gold and silver, esteeming this to be the chiefest ornament of his great palace. This Duke then, following the course of nature when he was sixty-five years of age, as he had lived, so did he end his life with glory. And left Duke after him a child of ten years, having no more male, and without mother, who hight Guidobaldo.

This child, as of the state, so did it appear also that he was heir of all his father's virtues; and suddenly with

a marvelous towardness began to promise so much of himself as a man would not have thought possible to be hoped of a man mortal. So that the opinion of men was, that of all Duke Federico's notable deeds there was none greater than that he begat such a son. But Fortune, envying this so great virtue, with all her might gainstood this so glorious a beginning, in such wise that before Duke Guidobaldo was twenty years of age he fell sick of the gout, the which, increasing upon him with most bitter pains, in a short time so numbed him of all his members that he could neither stand on foot nor move himself. And in this manner was one of the best favored and towardlyest personages in the world deformed and marred in his green age. And besides, not satisfied with this, Fortune was so contrary to him in all his purposes, that very seldom he brought to pass any thing to his mind. And for all he had in him most wise counsel, and an invincible courage, yet it seemed that whatsoever he took in hand, both in feats of arms and in every other thing, small or great, it came always to ill success. And of this make proof his many and divers calamities, which he always bore out with such stoutness of courage that virtue never yielded to fortune. But with a bold stomach, despising her storms, lived with great dignity and estimation among all men—in sickness as one that was sound, and in adversity as one that was most fortunate. So that, for all he was thus diseased in his body, he served in time of war with most honorable entertainment under the most famous kings of Naples, Alphonsus and Ferdinand the younger. Afterward with Pope Alexander VI, with the lords of Venice and Florence. And when Julius II was created Pope, he was then made General Captain of the Church; at

which time, proceeding in his accustomed usage, he set his delight above all things to have his house furnished with most noble and valiant gentlemen, with whom he lived very familiarly, enjoying their conversation, wherein the pleasure which he gave unto other men was no less than that he received of others, because he was very well seen in both tongues, and together with a loving behavior and pleasantness he had also accompanied the knowledge of infinite things. And besides this, the greatness of his courage so quickened him that, where he was not in case with his person to practise the feats of chivalry, as he had done long before, yet did he take very great delight to behold them in other men, and with his words sometime correcting, and otherwhile praising every man according to his deserts, he declared evidently how great a judgment he had in those matters.

And upon this at tilt, at tourney, in riding, in playing at all sorts of weapon, also in inventing devices, in pastimes, in music, finally in all exercises meet for noble gentlemen, every man strived to show himself such a one as might deserve to be judged worthy of so noble an assembly. Therefore were all the hours of the day divided into honorable and pleasant exercises, as well of the body as of the mind. But because the Duke used continually, by reason of his infirmity, soon after supper to go to his rest, every man ordinarily at that hour drew where the Duchess was, the Lady Elisabetta Gonzaga. Where also continually was the Lady Emilia Pia, who for that she was endowed with so lively a wit and judgment as you know, seemed the mistress and ringleader of all the company, and that every man at her received understanding and courage. There was then to be heard pleasant communication and merry conceits, and in every

man's countenance a man might perceive painted a loving jocundness. So that this house truly might well be called the very mansion-place of Mirth and Joy. And I believe it was never so tasted in other place, what manner a thing the sweet conversation is that is occasioned of an amiable and loving company, as it was once there. For leaving apart what honor it was to all us to serve such a Lord as he whom I declared unto you right now, every man conceived in his mind a high contention every time we came into the Duchess's sight. And it appeared that this was a chain that kept all linked together in love, in such wise that there was never agreement of will or hearty love greater between brethren than was there between us all. The like was between the women, with whom we had such free and honest conversation that every man might commune, sit, dally, and laugh with whom he had listed.

But such was the respect which we bore to the Duchess's will, that the selfsame liberty was a very great bridle. Neither was there any that thought it not the greatest pleasure he could have in the world, to please her, and the greatest grief to offend her. For this respect were most honest conditions coupled with wondrous great liberty, and devices of pastimes and laughing matters tempered in her sight, besides most witty jests, with so comely and grave a majesty that the very sober mood and greatness that did knit together all the acts, words and gestures of the Duchess in jesting and laughing, made them also that had never seen her in their life before to count her a very great lady. And all that came in her presence having this respect fixed in their breast, it seemed she had made them to her beck; so that every man enforced himself to follow this trade, taking,

as it were, a rule and ensample of fair conditions at the presence of so great and virtuous a lady, whose most excellent qualities I intend not now to express; for it is neither my purpose, and again they are well enough known to the world, and much better than I am able either with tongue or pen to indite. And such as would perhaps have lain hid a space, Fortune, as she that wondereth at so rare virtues, hath thought good with many adversities and temptations of miseries to disclose them, to make trial thereby that in the tender breast of a woman, in company with singular beauty, can dwell wisdom, and stoutness of courage, and all other virtues that in grave men themselves are most seldom.

But, leaving this apart, I say that the manner of all the gentlemen in the house was immediately after supper to assemble where the Duchess was. Where, among other recreations, music and dancing, which they used continually, sometime they propounded feat questions, otherwhile they invented certain witty sports and pastimes, at the device sometime of one, sometime of another, in the which, under sundry coverts, oftentimes the standers-by opened subtly their imaginations unto whom they thought best. At other times arose other disputations of divers matters, or else jestings with prompt inventions. Many times they fell into purposes, as we now-a-days term them, where in this kind of talk and debating of matters, there was wondrous great pleasure on all sides; because, as I have said, the house was replenished with most noble wits. Among which, as you know, were most famous the Lord Octaviano Fregoso, Sir Federico his brother, The Lord Giuliano de' Medici, Messer Pietro Bembo, the Lord Cesare Gonzaga, Count Lodovico of Canossa, the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino, the

Lord Lodovico Pio, Messer Morello of Ortona, Pietro of Naples, Messer Roberto da Bari, and infinite other most worthy knights and gentlemen. Besides these, there were many that for all ordinarily they dwelled not there, yet spent they most of their time there, as Messer Bernardo Bibbiena, Unico Aretino, Giancristoforo Romano, Pietro Monte, Terpandro, Messer Niccolò Frisio, so that thither ran continually poets, musicians, and all kinds of men of skill, and the excellentest in every faculty.

After Pope Julius II had with his own presence, by the aid of the Frenchmen, brought Bologna to the obedience of the Apostolic See again, in the year 1506, in his return toward Rome he took Urbino in his way, where he was received as honorably as possible, and with as sumptuous and costly preparation as could have been in any other city of Italy, whatsoever it be. So that, besides the Pope, all the Cardinals and other Courtiers thought themselves thoroughly satisfied. And some there were that, provoked with the sweetness of this company, after the Pope and the court was departed, continued many days together in Urbino. At which time they did not only proceed in their accustomed trade of disporting and ordinary recreations, but also every man set to his helping hand to augment them somewhat, and especially in pastimes, which they had up almost every night. And the order thereof was such that, as soon as they were assembled where the Duchess was, every man sat him down at his will, or as it fell to his lot, in a circle together, and in sitting were divided a man and a woman, as long as there were women, for always, lightly, the number of men was far the greater. Then they were governed as the Duchess thought best, which many times gave this charge unto the Lady Emilia.

So the day after the Pope was departed, the company being gathered to the accustomed place, after much pleasant talk, the Duchess's pleasure was that the Lady Emilia should begin these pastimes; and she after a little refusing of that charge, said in this manner; "Sith it is your pleasure, Madam, I shall be she that must give the onset in our pastimes this night, because I ought not of reason disobey you. I think meet to propound a pastime, whereof I suppose shall ensue little blame, and less travail. And that shall be, to have every man, as nigh as he can, propound a device not yet heard of, then shall we choose out such a one as shall be thought meet to be taken in hand in this company."

And after she had thus spoken, she turned her unto the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino, willing him to propound his, who immediately made answer: "But first, Madam, you must begin to propound yours."

Then said the Lady Emilia: "I have already done. But your Grace must command him, Madam, to be obedient."

Then the Duchess laughing: "To the intent," quoth she, "every man shall obey you, I make you my deputy, and give unto you all mine authority."

"It is surely a great matter," answered the Lord Gaspar, "that it is always lawful for women to have this privilege, to be exempt and free from painstaking, and truly reason would we should in any wise know why. But because I will not be he that shall give example to disobey, I shall leave this until another time, and will speak of that I am now charged withal, and thus I begin. Mine opinion is, that our minds, as in other things, so also in loving, are diverse in judgment, and therefore it chanceth oftentimes that the thing which is most ac-

ceptable unto one, is most abhorred of another. Yet for all that they always agree in that every man counteth most dear the wight beloved. So that many times the overmuch affection in lovers doth so deceive their judgment that they ween the person whom they love to be so garnished with all excellent virtues, and without fault, that he hath no peer in the world. But because the nature of man doth not admit such full perfections, and there is no man that hath not some default or want in him, it can not be said that such as these be are not deceived, and that the lover doth not become blind as touching the beloved. I would, therefore, our pastime should be this night to have every man opine what virtues he would principally the person he loveth should be endowed withal. And seeing it is so necessarily that we all have some spot, what vice he would also have in him; to see who can find out most praiseworthy and manly virtues, and most tolerable vices, that should be least hurtful both to him that loveth and to the wight beloved."

After the Lord Gaspar had thus spoken, the Lady Emilia made a sign unto the Lady Costanza Fregosa, because she was next in order, to follow; who was now about to speak, when the Duchess suddenly said: "Seeing the Lady Emilia will not take the pain to find out some pastime, reason willeth that the other ladies should be partakers of the same privilege, and be also free from this burden for this night; especially seeing there are so many men in place, for assure yourself we shall want no pastimes."

"So shall we do," answered the Lady Emilia, and putting the Lady Costanza to silence turned her to the Lord Cesare Gonzaga, that sat next her, commanding

him to speak, and thus he began: "Whoso will diligently consider all our doings, he shall find always in them sundry imperfections. And that happeneth because nature doth vary, as well in this as in all other things. Unto one she hath given the light of reason in one thing, and unto another in another thing. Therefore it cometh to pass where one man knoweth that another knoweth not, and is ignorant in the thing that the other hath understanding in. Each man doth easily perceive the error of his fellow, and not his own, and we all think ourselves to be very wise, and peradventure in that point most wherein we are most foolish. So that we have seen by experience in this house many men which at the beginning were counted most wise, in process of time were known to be most foolish. Which hath proceeded of no other thing but of our own diligence, like as it is said to be in Pulia of them that are bitten with a tarantula, about whom men occupy many instruments of music, and with sundry sounds go searching out, until the humor that maketh this disease, by a certain concordance it hath with some of those sounds, feeling it, doth suddenly move, and so stirreth the patient that by that stirring he recovereth his health again. In like manner we, when we have felt some private operation of folly, we provoke it so subtly, and with such sundry persuasions and so diverse ways, that at length we understand whither it tended. Afterward, the humor known, we so stir it that always it is brought to the perfection of open folly. And some is waxed foolish in verses, some in music, some in love, some in dancing, some in making antiques, some in riding, some in playing at fence, every man according to the moine of his metal, whereby hath ensued, as you know, marvelous great pastime. I hold therefore

for certain, that in every one of us there is some seed of folly, the which being stirred may multiply in a manner infinite. Therefore I would this night our pastime were to dispute upon this matter; and that every man might say his mind: seeing I must be openly foolish, in what sort of folly I am foolish, and over what matter, judging it the issue for the sparkles of folly that are daily seen to proceed from me. And let the like be said of all the rest, keeping the order of our devices, and let every man do his best to ground his opinion upon some sure sign and argument, and so by this our pastime shall every one of us get profit, in that we shall know our defaults, and then shall we the better take heed. And in case the vein of folly which we shall discover be so rank that it shall appear to us past remedy, we will set thereto our helping hand, and, according to the doctrine of Friar Marian, we shall gain a soul, which shall be no small gain."

At this device there was much laughing, and none could refrain from speaking. One said, "I should be found foolish in imagining." Another, in viewing. Another said he was already become foolish for love—and such like matters.

Then Friar Serafino, after his manner, laughing: "This," quoth he, "should be too tedious a matter. But if you will have a pretty pastime, let every man tell his opinion how it cometh that, in a manner, all women abhor rats, and love serpents, and you shall see that none will hit upon it but I, that know this mystery by a strange means."

And now began he to enter into his trifling tales; but the Lady Emilia commanded him to silence, and overskipping the lady that sat there, made a sign to Unico Are-

tino, that was next in order, and he without looking for any more bidding: "I," quoth he, "would gladly be a judge of authority that I might with all kind of torment bolt out the truth of offenders; and that, to discover the deceits of an ingrate woman, who, with the eyes of an angel and heart of a serpent, never agreeth her tongue with her mind, and with a feigned deceivable compassion purposeth nothing else but to make anatomy of hearts. Neither is there in all the sandy country of Lybia to be found so venemous a serpent, that is so desirous of man's blood, as is this false creature. Which not only for the sweetness of voice and pleasant sound of words, but also for her eyes, for her laughing, for her countenance, and for all her gestures, is a most perfect mermaiden. Therefore, seeing it is not lawful for me, as I would, to use chains, ropes, or fire, to understand a matter of truth, my desire is to compass the knowledge of it with a merry pastime, which is this: That every man should express his fancy what the S doth signify that the Duchess carryeth in her forehead. For although this be also an artificial covert, the better to beguile, perhaps there may be an interpretation which she never thought upon. And who knoweth whether Fortune, with pity beholding the torments of men, hath stirred her with this small token to discover against her will the inward desire she hath to slay and bury alive in calamity him that honored and serveth her." The Duchess laughed, and Unico, perceiving she would have excused herself of this interpretation, "No," quoth he, "speak you not, Madam, for it is not your turn to speak now."

The Lady Emilia then turned her and said: "Messer Unico, there is none of us all here that giveth not place to you in everything, and especially in knowing the dis-

position of the Duchess. And as you by your divine wit know her better than all the rest, so do you love her better than all the rest, which like birds of a feeble sight, that cannot look steadfastly into the circle of the Sun, cannot so well perceive the perfection of it. Therefore all labor were in vain in clearing of this doubt, saving your judgment alone. This enterprise, then, is reserved only to you, as unto him that alone can bring it to an end, and none other."

Unico, after he had paused a while, being still called upon to say his fancy, at length rehearsed a rhyme upon the aforesaid matter, expounding what signified the letter S, the which many judged to be made at the first sight. But because it was more witty and better knit than a man would have believed the shortness of time required, it was thought he had prepared it before.

So after men's favorable voice given in the praise of this rhyme, and after sufficient talk, the Lord Octavian Fregoso, whose turn was then next, began in this sort, smiling: "My lords, if I should say unto you that I never felt passion of love in my days, I am sure the Duchess and the Lady Emilia, although they believed it not in deed, yet would they make semplant to believe it, and would say that it proceeded because I mistrusted I should never frame any woman to love me. The which truly I have not hitherto proved with such instance that of reason I should despair to obtain it once. Neither have I forborne the doing of it because I set so much by myself, and so little by women, that I think none worthy to bestow my love and service upon. But rather amazed at the continual bewailings of some lovers, that with their paleness, sorrow, and silence, it appeareth they have evermore their own discomfort painted in their eyes. And

if they speak, accompanying every word with certain treblefold sighs, they reason of nothing else but of tears, of torments, of desperations, and of longing for death. So that whensoever any sparkle of love hath begun to kindle in my breast, I have by-and-by enforced myself with all diligence to quench it, not for any hatred that I have conceived against women, as these ladies suppose, but for mine own health. On the other side, I have known some other clean contrary to these sorrowful, which do not only advance and content themselves with the cheerful looks, loving words, and sweet countenances of their ladies, but also sauce their sorrows with sweetness, so that they count the debates, the angers and the disdains of them most sweet. Therefore these men seem unto me to be much more than happy, for whereas they find so much sweetness in the amorous disdains, which some men reckon much more bitter than death, I believe in loving gestures they should feel that wonderful bliss which we seek for in vain in this world. Therefore would I our pastime were this night to have every man show, where there must be a disdain against him in the person beloved, what the cause should be that should make the person to conceive this same disdain. For if there be any here that have proved those sweet disdains, I am sure that they will desire for courtesy one of these causes that make them so sweet. And perhaps I shall with a better will proceed somewhat farther in love, in hope that I shall also find this sweetness, whereas some find bitterness, and so shall not these ladies give me any more this slanderous report, that I am not in love."

This pastime was much praised, and therefore did every man settle himself to reason upon this matter. But the

Lady Emilia holding her peace, Messer Pietro Bembo, that sat next in order, spake in this manner: "My Lords, this pastime that the Lord Octaviano hath propounded hath raised no small doubt in my mind, where he hath reasoned of the disdains of love, the which, though they be sundry, yet unto me have they always been most bitter. Neither do I believe that I can learn any sauce that shall be sufficient to sweeten them. But peradventure they are the more and the less bitter according to the cause whereof they arise. For I have in my days, I well remember, seen the woman whom I served, stirred against me, either upon a vain suspicion that she conceived herself of my trustiness, or else upon some other false opinion that had been put into her head by some men's report to my hindrance, so that I believed no grief might be compared to mine. And methought that the greatest sorrow I felt was to suffer without deserving, and to sustain this affliction, not for any offense of mine, but for the small love that was in her. At other times I saw her disdainful for some oversight of mine, and knew that her anger proceeded of mine offense, and at that instant I judged the former vexation to be very light in comparison to that which I felt then. And methought to be in displeasure, and that for mine own trespass, with the person whom only I coveted and with such diligence sought to please, was the greatest torment of all other. Therefore would I our pastime were to have every man declare his opinion, where there must be a disdain against him in the person beloved, of whom he would the cause of this disdain should have its beginning, whether of her or of himself; to know which is the greater grief, either to displease the wight beloved, or to receive displeasure of the wight beloved."

Every man looked what the Lady Emilia would make answer to this; but, without any word speaking to Bembo, she turned her and made a sign to Sir Federico Fregoso to show his device. And he incontinently began thus: "Madam, I would it were lawful for me, as the manner is many times to remit me to the judgment of another, for I for my part would with all my heart allow some of the pastimes that have been already propounded by these Lords, because indeed methink they would be worth the hearing. Yet lest I should break the order, this I say: Whoso would take in hand to praise our court, leaving apart the deserts of the Duchess, which ghostly sprite, with her influence, is sufficient to draw from the earth up into heaven the simplest wits in the world, he might well do it without suspicion of flattery. For peradventure in all Italy a man shall have much ado to find out so many gentlemen and noble personages that are so worthy, and besides the principal profession of chivalry, so excellent in sundry things, as are presently here. Therefore if in any place men may be found that deserve the name of good courtiers, and can judge what belongeth to the perfection of courtiership, by reason a man may believe them to be here. To disgrace therefore many untowardly assheads, that through malpertness think to purchase them the name of a good courtier, I would have such a pastime for this night, that one of the company might be picked out who should take in hand to shape in words a good courtier, specifying all such conditions and particular qualities as of necessity must be in him that deserveth this name. And in such things as shall not appear necessary, that it may be lawful for any man to reply as the manner of philosophers' schools is against him that keepeth disputations."

Sir Federico proceedeth still forward in his talk, when the Lady Emilia, interrupting him, said: "If it be my Lady the Duchess's pleasure, this shall be our pastime for this once.

The Duchess answered: "I am well pleased."

Then, in manner, all the company began to say, both to the Duchess and among themselves, that this was the trimmest pastime they could have, and without looking for answer the one of the other they craved upon the Lady Emilia to appoint who should begin. Who turning her toward the Duchess said: "Command you, Madam, who shall please you to take this enterprise in hand; for I will not, by choosing more one than another, declare myself to judge, in this behalf, whom I think to be better skilled than the rest, and so do wrong to some."

The Duchess answered: "Make you this choice yourself, and take heed that in disobeying you be not a precedent to the rest to be disobedient."

Then the Lady Emilia said, laughing, unto Ludovico, Count of Canossa: "Therefore for losing any more time, you, Count, shall be he that shall take this enterprise upon him in form and manner as Sir Federico hath declared. Not for that we know that you are so good a courtier that you have at your fingers' ends that belongeth thereto; but because in repeating everything adversely as we hope you will, we shall have so much the more pastime, and every one shall be able to answer you, where if another more skilful than you should take it in hand, there should be nothing said against him for telling the truth, and so should we have but a cold pastime."

The Count answered by-and-by: "We need not fear, Madam, that we shall want contrarying in words against him that telleth the truth, as long as you be here." And

after they had laughed a while at this answer, he proceeded: "But truly I would with all my heart be rid of this burden, for it is too hard for me. And I know that to be most true in me which you have spoken in jest, namely, that I have no understanding in that belongeth to a good courtier. And this do I not seek to prove with any other trial, for seeing I do not the deeds, a man may judge I understand it not, and I believe I am the less to be blamed. For out of doubt it is a worse matter not to do well, than not to understand how to do it. Yet seeing your pleasure is that I shall take the charge upon me, I can not, nor will refuse it, for, withstanding your order and judgment, the which I know is much better than mine."

Then the Lord Cesare Gonzaga: "Because it is now," quoth he, "well forward in night, and have here ready for us other sorts of pastimes, peradventure it should not be amiss to defer this reasoning until to-morrow, and the Count shall have leisure to think better upon that he hath to say; for in very deed to entreat upon such a matter at the first sight, it is a hard thing."

Then answered the Count: "I will not do as he did that stripped himself into his doublet, and leaped less ground than he did before in his coat. And methink my luck is good that it is late, because the shortness of time shall make me use few words, and the suddenness of the matter shall so excuse me that it shall be lawful for me to speak without blame whatsoever cometh first to mind. Because I will not therefore carry this burden of duty any longer upon my shoulders, this I say: In everything it is so hard a matter to know the true perfection, that it is almost impossible, and that by reason of the variety of judgments. Therefore many there are that

delight in a man of much talk, and him they call a pleasant fellow. Some will delight more in modesty; some other will fancy a man that is active and always doing; other, one that showeth a quietness and a respect in everything. And thus doth every man praise or dispraise according to his fancy, always covering a vice with the name of the next virtue to it, and a virtue with the name of the next vice; as in calling him that is saucy, bold; him that is sober, dry; him that is silly, good; him that is unhappy, witty; and likewise in the rest.

"Yet do I think that each thing has its perfection, although it be hid, and with reasonable discourses might be judged of him that hath knowledge in the matter. And for as much as the truth, as I have said, is oftentimes hid, and I take not upon me to have this knowledge, I cannot praise but that kind of courtiers that I set most by, and allow that which seemeth unto me most nigh the truth, in my small judgment. The which you shall follow if you think it good, or else stick to your own, if it shall vary from mine. Neither will I, for all that, stand stiff that mine is better than yours, for not only one thing may seem up to you and an other to me, but also unto myself it may appear sometime one thing, sometime another. I will have this our Courtier, therefore, to be a gentleman born and of a good house. For it is a great deal less dispraise for him that is not born a gentleman to fail in the acts of virtue than for a gentleman. If he swerve from the steps of his ancestors, he staineth the name of his family, and doth not only not get, but loseth that is already gotten. For nobleness of birth is, as it were, a clear lamp that showeth forth, and bringeth into light, works both good and bad, and inflameth and provoketh unto virtue, as well with the fear of

slander, as also with the hope of praise. And whereas this brightness of nobleness doth not discover the works of the unnoble, they have a want of provocation and of fear of slander, and they reckon not themselves bound to wade any further than their ancestors did before them, whereas the noble of birth count it a shame not to arrive at the least at the bounds of their predecessors set forth unto them. Therefore it chanceth always, in a manner, both in arms and in all other virtuous acts, that the most famous men are gentlemen. Because nature in every thing hath deeply sowed that privy seed, which giveth a certain force and property of her beginning unto whatsoever springeth of it, and maketh it like unto herself. As we see by example, not only in the race of horses and other beasts, but also in trees, whose slips and grafts always for the most part are like unto the stock of the tree they came from; and if at any time they grow out of kind, the fault is in the husbandman. And the like is in men, if they be trained up in good nurture, most commonly they resemble them from whom they come, and oftentimes pass them, but if they have not one that can well train them up, they grow, as it were, wild, and never come to their ripeness. Truth it is, whether it be through the favor of the stars or of nature, some are born endowed with such graces that they seem not to have been born, but rather fashioned with the very hand of some god, and abound in all goodness both of body and mind. As again we see some so unapt and dull that a man will not believe but Nature hath brought them into the world for a spite and mockery. And like as these with continual diligence and good bringing-up for the most part can bring small fruit; even so the other with little attendance climb to perfection of excellence.

"Mark me the Lord Hyppolito da Este, Cardinal of Ferrara. He hath had so happy a birth that his person, his countenance, his words, and all his gestures are so fashioned and compact with this grace that among the most ancient prelates, for all he is but young, he doth represent so grave an authority that a man would ween he were more meet to teach than needful to learn. Likewise in company with men and women of all degrees, in sporting, in laughing, and in jesting he hath in him a certain sweetness, and so comely demeanors, that whoso speaketh with him or yet beholdeth him, must needs bear him an affection forever. But returning to our purpose I say, that between this excellent grace and that fond foolishness there is yet a mean; and they that are not by nature so perfectly furnished, with study and diligence may polish and correct a great part of the defaults of nature. The Courtier, therefore, besides nobleness of birth, I will have him to be fortunate in this behalf, and by nature to have not only a wit and a comely shape of person and countenance, but also a certain grace, and, as they say, a hue, that shall make him at the first sight acceptable and loving unto whoso beholdeth him. And let this be an ornament to frame and accompany all his acts, and to assure men in his look, such a one to be worthy the company and favor of every great man."

Here without any longer tarrying the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino said: "That our pastime may have the form and manner agreed upon, and lest it should appear that we little esteem the authority given us to contrary you, I say, in mine advice, that this nobleness of birth is not so necessary for the Courtier. And if I wist that any of you thought it a strange or a new matter, I would allege unto you sundry, who for all they were born of most

noble blood, yet have they been heaped full of vices: and contrarywise, many unnoble that have made famous their posterity. And if it be true that you said before, that the privy force of the first seed is in everything, we should all be in one manner condition, for that we had all one self beginning, and one should not be more noble than another. But besides the diversities and degrees in us of high and low, I believe there be many other matters, wherein I judge Fortune to be the chief, because we see her bear a stroke, in all worldly things, and, as it were, take a pastime to exalt many times whom pleaseth her without any desert at all, and bury in the bottomless depth the most worthy to be exalted. I confirm your saying as touching the happiness of them that are born abounding in all goodness both of mind and body; but this is seen as well in the unnoble as in the noble of birth, for Nature hath not these so subtle distinctions; yea, as I have said, we see many times in persons of most base degree most high gifts of nature. Therefore seeing this nobleness is gotten neither with force nor art, but is rather a praise of our ancestors than our own, methink it a strange opinion that, the parents of our Courtier being unnoble, his good qualities should be defaced, and these our good conditions which you have named should not be sufficient to bring him to the top of all perfection—that is to say, wit, beauty of physiognomy, disposition of person, and that grace which at the first sight shall make him most acceptable unto all men."

Then answered Count Lodovico: "I deny not but in men of base degree may reign the very same virtues that are in gentlemen. But to avoid rehearsal of that we have already said, with many other reasons that might be alleged in commendation of nobleness, the which is ever-

more honored of all men because it standeth with reason that good should spring of good, forsomuch as our intent is to fashion a Courtier without any manner default or lack in him, and heaped with all praise, methink it a necessary matter to make him a gentleman, as well for many other respects, as also for the common opinion, which by-and-by doth lean to nobleness. For where there are two in a noble man's house which at the first have given no proof of themselves with works good or bad, as soon as it is known that the one is a gentleman born, and the other not, the unnoble shall be much less esteemed with every man than the gentleman, and he must with much travail and long time imprint in men's heads a good opinion of himself, which the other shall get in a moment, and only for that he is a gentleman; and how weighty these imprintings are, every man may easily judge. For, to speak of ourselves, we have seen men come to this house, which for all they were fools and dull-witted, yet had they a report through all Italy of great courtiers, and though at length they were discovered and known, yet many days did they beguile us, and maintained in our minds that opinion of themselves which at the first they found there imprinted, although they wrought according to their small skill. We have seen others at the first in very small estimation, and afterward in the end have acquitted themselves marvelous well. And of these errors there are divers causes, and among other the obstinateness of princes, which to prove masteries oftentimes bend themselves to favor him that to their seeming deserveth no favor at all, and many times indeed they are deceived. But because they have always many that counterfeit them, a very great report dependeth upon their favor, the which most commonly

judgments follow. And if they find anything that seemeth contrary to the common opinion, they are in doubt for deceiving themselves, and always look for some matter secretly, because it seemeth that these general opinions ought to be founded upon a truth, and arise of reasonable causes.

"And forsomuch as our minds are very apt to love and to hate: as in the sights of combats and games and in all other kind of contention one with another, it is seen that the lookers-on many times bear affection, without any manifest cause why, unto one of the two parties, with a greedy desire to have him get the victory, and the other to have the overthrow. Also as touching the opinion of men's qualities, the good or ill report at the first brunt moveth our mind to one of these two passions; therefore it cometh to pass that for the most part we judge with love or else with hatred. You see, then, of what importance this first imprinting is, and how he ought to endeavor himself to get it good in princes, if he intend to be set by, and to purchase him the name of a good Courtier. But to come to some particularity, I judge the principal and true profession of a Courtier ought to be in feats of arms, the which above all I will have him to practise lively, and to be known among other for his hardiness, for his achieving of enterprises, and for his fidelity toward him whom he serveth. And he shall purchase himself a name with these good conditions, in doing the deeds in every time and place; for it is not for him to faint at any time in this behalf without a wondrous reproach. And even as in women honesty once stained doth never return again to the former estate, so the fame of a gentleman that carryeth weapon, if it once take a foil in any little point through dastard-

liness or any other reproach, doth evermore continue shameful in the world and full of ignorance. Therefore the more excellent our Courtier shall be in this art, the more shall he be worthy praise; albeit I judge not necessary in him so perfect a knowledge of things and other qualities that is requisite in a captain.

"But because this is overlarge a scope of matters, we will hold ourselves contented, as we have said, with the uprightness of a well-meaning mind, and with an invincible courage, and that he always show himself such a one; for many times men of courage are sooner known in small matters than in great. Oftentimes in dangers that stand them upon, and where many eyes be, ye shall see some that for all their heart is dead in their body, yet pricked with shame or with the company, go forward, as it were, blindfold and do their duty. And God knoweth both in matters that little touch them, and also where they suppose that without missing they may convey themselves from danger, how they are willing enough to sleep in a whole skin. But such as think themselves neither marked, seen, nor known, and yet declare a stout courage, and suffer not the least thing in the world to pass that may burden them, they have the courage of spirit which we seek to have in our Courtier. Yet will we not have him for all that so lusty to make bravery in words, and to brag that he hath wedded his harness for his wife, and to threaten with such grim looks as we have seen Berto do oftentimes. For unto such may well be said that a worthy gentlewoman in a noble assembly spake pleasantly unto one that shall be nameless for this time, whom she, to show him a good countenance, desired to dance with her, and he refusing both that and to hear music and many other entertainments

offered him, always affirming such trifles not to be his profession, at last the gentlewoman demanding him, 'What is, then, your profession?' he answered with a frowning look, 'To fight.' Then said the gentlewoman, 'Seeing you are not now at the war, nor in place to fight, I would think it best for you to be well besmeared and set up in an armory with other implements of war, till time were that you should be occupied, lest you wax more rustier than you are.' Thus, with much laughing of the standers-by, she left him with a mock in his foolish presumption. He therefore that we seek for, where the enemies are, shall show himself most fierce, bitter, and evermore with the first; in every place beside, lowly, sober, and circumspect, fleeing above all things bragging and unshameful praising himself, for therewith a man always purchaseth himself the hatred and ill will of the hearers."

"And I," answered the Lord Gaspar, "have known few men excellent in anything, whatsoever it be, but they praise themselves. And methink it may well be born in them; for he that is of skill, when he seeth that he is not known for his works of the ignorant, hath a disdain that his cunning should lie buried, and needs must be open it one way, lest he should be defrauded of the estimation that belongeth to it, which is the true reward of virtuous travails. Therefore among the ancient writers he that much excelleth doth seldom forbear praising himself. They indeed are not to be borne withal that, having no skill in them, will praise themselves; but we will not take our Courtier to be such a one."

Then the Count: "If you have well understood," quoth he, "I blamed the praising of a man's self impudently and without respect. And surely, as you say, a man

ought not to conceive an ill opinion of a skilful man that praiseth himself discreetly, but rather take it for a more certain witness than if it came out of another man's mouth. I agree well that he which in praising himself falleth not into error, nor purchaseth himself loathsomeness or hatred of the hearers, is most discreet, and besides the praises which he giveth himself, deserveth the same of other men also, because it is a very hard matter."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "This," quoth he, "must you teach us."

The Count answered: "Among the ancient writers there hath not also wanted that hath taught it. But, in mine opinion, all doth consist in speaking such things after a sort that it may appear that they are not rehearsed to that end, but that they come so to purpose that he can not refrain telling them, and, always seeming to flee his own praise, tell the truth. But not as those lusty lads do that open their mouth and thrust out words at a venture, they care not how. As within these few days one of our company, being pushed through the thigh with a pike at Pisa, thought that it was the biting of a fly. And another said that he occupied no looking-glass in his chamber, because in his rage he was so terrible to behold that in looking upon his own countenance he should put himself into much fear."

At this every one laughed. But the Lord Cesare Gonzaga said unto them: "At what laugh you? Know you not that the great Alexander, hearing a certain philosopher's opinion to be that there were infinite worlds, fell in weeping, and when he was asked the question why he wept, he answered, 'Because I have not yet one in hand,' as if his mind was to have them all. Do you not think this a greater bravery than to speak of fly-biting?"

"So was Alexander a greater person than he that so said," answered the Count. "But excellent men in very deed are to be held excused, when they take much upon them; because he that undertaketh great enterprise must have a boldness to do it, and a confidence of himself, and not of a bashful or cowardly mind, but yet sober in words, showing as if he took less upon him than he doth indeed, so that his taking upon him do not extend into rashness."

Here the Court respiting a while, Messer Bernardo Bibbiena said merely: 'I remember you said before that this our Courtier ought of nature to have a fair comeliness of physiognomy and person, with the grace that ought to make him so amiable. As for the grace and beauty of physiognomy, I think not the contrary but they are in me, and therefore do so many women burn for the love of me, as you know. But for the comeliness of person I stand somewhat in doubt, and especially by reason of my legs here, for methink indeed they are not so well made as I could wish they were; the body and the rest is meetly well. Therefore, declare somewhat more particularly this comeliness of person what it should be, that I may be out of this doubt and set my heart at rest."

When they had a while laughed at this, the Count said: "Certes, the grace of the physiognomy may well be said to be in you without any lie. And no other example do I allege but this, to declare what manner thing it should be; for undoubtedly we see your countenance is most acceptable and pleasant to behold unto every man, although the proportion and draughts of it be not very delicate, but it is manly and hath a good grace withal. And this quality have many and sundry shapes of vis-

ages. And such a countenance as this is, will I have our Courtier to have, and not so soft and womanish as many procure to have, that do not only curl the hair, and pick the brows, but also pamper themselves in every point like the most wanton and dishonest women in the world; and a man would think them in going, in standing, and in all their gestures so tender and faint that their members were ready to flee one from another, and their words they pronounce so drawningly that a man would ween they were at that instant yielding up the ghost. And the higher in degree the men are they talk withal, the more they use such fashions. These men, seeing nature (as they seem to have a desire to appear and to be) hath not made them women, ought not to be esteemed in place of good women, but like common harlots to be banished, not only out of princes' courts, but also out of the company of gentlemen.

"To come, therefore, to the quality of the person, I say he is well if he be neither of the least nor of the greatest size. For both the one and the other hath with it a certain spiteful wonder, and such men are marveled at, almost as much as men marvel to behold monstrous things. Yet if there must needs be a default in one of the two extremities, it shall be less hurtful to be somewhat of the least than to exceed the common stature in height. For men so shot up of body, beside that many times they are of a dull wit, they are also inapt for all exercises of nimbleness, which I much desire to have in the Courtier. And therefore will I have him to be of a good shape, and well proportioned in his limbs, and to show strength, lightness, and quickness, and to have understanding in all exercises of the body that belong to a man of war. And herein I think the chief point is to

handle well all kind of weapon both for footman and horseman, and to know the vantages in it. And especially to be skilful on those weapons that are used ordinarily among gentlemen, for beside the use that he shall have of them in war, where peradventure needeth no great cunning, there happen oftentimes variances between one gentleman and another, whereupon ensueth a combat. And many times it shall stand him in stead to use the weapon which he hath at that instant by his side. Therefore it is a very sure thing to be skilful. And I am none of them which say, that he forgetteth his cunning when he cometh to the point; for to abide by, whoso loseth his cunning at that time, showeth that he hath first lost his heart and his spirits for fear. I think also it will serve his turn greatly to know the feat of wrestling, because it goeth much together with all weapon on foot.

"Again, it is behoofful both for himself and for his friends, that he have a foresight in the quarrels and controversies that may happen, and let him beware of the vantages, declaring always in every point both courage and wisdom. Neither let him run rashly to these combats, but when he must needs to save his estimation withal; for besides the great danger that is in the doubtful lot, he that goeth headlong to these things and without urgent cause, deserveth very great blame, although his chance be good. But when a man perceiveth that he is entered so far that he cannot draw back without burden, he must, both in such things he hath to do before the combat and also in the combat, be utterly resolved with himself, and always show a readiness and a stomach. And not as some do pass the matter in arguing and points, and, having the choice of weapon, take such as

have neither point nor edge, and arm themselves as though they should go against the shot of a cannon. And weening it sufficient not to be vanquished, stand always at their defense and give ground, insomuch that they declare an extreme faint heart, and are a mocking-stock to the very children. As those two of Ancona, that a while ago fought a combat beside Perugia, and made them to laugh that looked on."

"And what were they?" quoth the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino.

The Lord Cesare answered: "Cousins german of two sisters."

Then said the Count: "At the combat a man would have thought them natural brethren. Also men occupy their weapons oftentimes in time of peace about sundry exercises, and gentlemen are seen in open shows in the presence of people, women, and princes. Therefore will I have our Courtier a perfect horseman for every saddle. And besides the skill in horses and in whatsoever belongeth to a horseman, let him set all his delight and diligence to wade in everything a little farther than other men, so that he may be known among all men for one that is excellent. As it is read of Alcibiades, that he excelled all other nations wheresoever he came, and every man in the thing he had most skill in. So shall this our Courtier pass other men, and every man in his own profession. And because it is the peculiar praise of us Italians to ride well, to manage with reason especially rough horses, to run at the ring and at tilt, he shall be in this among the best Italians. At tournament, in keeping a passage, in fighting at barriers, he shall be good among the best Frenchmen. At joco-di-canne, running-at-bull, and casting of spears and darts, he shall be among the

Spaniards excellent. But principally let him accompany all his motion with a certain good judgment and grace, if he will deserve that general favor which is so much set by.

"There be also many other exercises, the which, though they depend not thoroughly upon arms, yet have they a great agreement with them, and have in them much manly activity. And of them methink hunting is one of the chiefest, for it hath a certain likeness with war, and truly a pastime for great men, and fit for one living in court. And it is found that it hath also been much used among them of old time. It is meet for him also to have the art of swimming, to leap, to run, to cast the stone; for besides the profit that he may receive of this in the wars, it happeneth to him many times to make proof of himself in such things, whereby he getteth him a reputation, especially among the multitude, unto whom a man must sometime apply himself. Also it is a noble exercise and meet for one living in court to play at tennis, where the disposition of the body, the quickness and nimbleness of every member, is much perceived, and almost whatsoever a man can see in all other exercises. And I reckon vaulting of no less praise, which for all it is painful and hard, maketh a man more light and quicker than any of the rest; and besides the profit, if that lightness be accompanied with a good grace, it maketh, in my judgment, a better show than any of the rest.

"If our Courtier then be taught these exercises more than indifferently well, I believe that he may set aside tumbling, climbing upon a cord, and such other matters that taste somewhat of jugglers' craft and do little beseem a gentleman. But because we cannot always endure among these so painful doings, besides that the

continuance goeth nigh to give a man his fill, and taketh away the admiration that men have of things seldom seen, we must continually alter our life with practising sundry matters. Therefore will I have our Courtier to descend many times to more easy and pleasant exercises. And to avoid envy and to keep company pleasantly with every man, let him do whatsoever other men do; so he decline not at any time from commendable deeds, but governeth himself with that good judgment that will not suffer him to enter into any folly; but let him laugh, dally, jest, and dance, yet in such wise that he may always declare himself to be witty and discreet, and everything that he doeth or speaketh, let him do it with a grace."

"Truly," said then the Lord Cesare Gonzaga, "the course of this communication should not be stopped. But if I should hold my peace, I should not satisfy the liberty which I have to speak, nor the desire that I have to understand one thing. And let me be pardoned if where I ought to speak against, I demand a question. If I do well bear in mind, methink, Count Lodovico, you have this night oftentimes repeated, that the Courtier ought to accompany all his doings, gestures, demeanors, finally all his motions, with a grace, and this, methink, you put for a sauce to everything, without the which all his other properties and good conditions were little worth. And I believe verily that every man would soon be persuaded therein, for by the virtue of the word a man may say that whoso hath grace is gracious. But because you have said sundry times that it is the gift of nature and of the heavens, and again, where it is not so perfect, that it may with study and diligence be made much more, they that be born so happy and so wealthy

with such a treasure, as some that we see, methink therein they have little need of any other teacher, because the bountiful favor of heaven doth, as it were, in spite of them, guide them higher than they covet, and maketh them not only acceptable but marvelous unto all the world. Therefore I do not reason of this, because the obtaining of it of ourselves lieth not in our power; but such as by nature have only so much that they be apt to become gracious in bestowing labor, exercise, and diligence, I would fain know with what art, with what learning, and by what means they shall compass this grace, as well in the exercises of the body, wherein you think it so necessary a matter, as in all other things that they do or speak. Therefore as you have in praising this quality to us engendered, I believe, in all a fervent thirst to come by it, by the charge you received of the Lady Emilia, so with teaching it, you are bound to quench it."

"Bound I am not," quoth the Count, "to teach you to have a good grace, nor anything else, saving only to show you what a perfect Courtier ought to be. Neither will I take upon me to teach you this perfection, since a while ago I said that the Courtier ought to have the feat of wrestling and vaulting, and such other things, the which how I should be able to teach them, not having learned them myself, I am sure you know it all. It sufficeth that as a good soldier can speak his mind to an armorer of what fashion, of what temper and goodness he will have his harness, and for all that cannot teach him to make it, nor to hammer or temper it, so perhaps I am able to tell you what a perfect Courtier ought to be, but not to teach you how you should do to be one. Notwithstanding, to fulfil your request in what I am able, although it be, in manner, in a proverb that grace

is not to be learned, I say unto you, whoso mindeth to be gracious or to have a good grace in the exercises of the body, presupposing first that he be not of nature inapt, ought to begin betimes, and to learn his principles of cunning men. The which thing how necessary a matter Philip King of Macedonia thought it, a man may gather in that his will was that Aristotle, so famous a philosopher, and perhaps the greatest that ever hath been in the world, should be the man that should instruct Alexander his son in the first principles of letters. And of men whom we know nowadays, mark how well and with what a good grace Sir Galliazzo Sanseverino, master of the horse to the French King, doth all exercises of the body; and that because, besides the natural disposition of person that is in him, he hath applied all his study to learn of cunning men, and to have continually excellent men about him, and of every one to choose the best of that they have skill in. For as in wrestling, in vaulting, and in learning to handle sundry kind of weapons, he hath taken for his guide our Messer Pietro Mount, who, as you know, is the true and only master of all artificial force and sleight, so in riding, in jousting, and in every other feat, he hath always had before his eyes the most perfectest that hath been known to be in those professions.

"He, therefore, that will be a good scholar, besides the practising of good things, must evermore set all his diligence to be like his master, and, if it were possible, change himself into him. And when he hath had some entry, it profiteth him much to behold sundry men of that profession, and governing himself with that good judgment that must always be his guide, go about to pick out, sometime of one and sometime of another, sun-

dry matters. And even as the bee in the green meadows fleeth always about the grass, choosing out flowers, so shall our Courtier steal this grace from them that to his seeming have it, and from each one that parcel that shall be most worthy praise. And not do, as a friend of ours, whom you all know, that thought he resembled much King Ferdinand the younger of Aragon, and regarded not to resemble him in any other point but in the often lifting up his head, wrying therewithal a part of his mouth, the which custom the King had gotten by infirmity. And many such there are that think they do much, so they resemble a great man in somewhat, and take many times the thing in him that worst becometh him. But I, imagining with myself oftentimes how this grace cometh, leaving apart such as have it from above, find one rule that is most general which in this part, methink, taketh place in all things belonging to man in word or deed above all other. And that is to eschew as much as a man may, and as a sharp and dangerous rock, affectation or curiosity and (to speak a new word) to use in everything a certain recklessness, to cover art withal, and seem whatsoever he doeth and sayeth to do it without pain, and, as it were, not minding it. And of this do I believe grace is much derived; for in rare matters and well brought to pass every man knoweth the hardness of them, so that a readiness therein maketh great wonder. And contrarywise to use force, and, as they say, to hale by the hair, giveth a great disgrace, and maketh everything, how great soever it be, to be little esteemed. Therefore that may be said to be a very art that appeareth not to be art; neither ought a man to put more diligence in anything than in covering it; for in case it be open it loseth credit, and maketh a man little set by.

"And I remember that I have read in my days that there were some most excellent orators, which, among their other cares, enforced themselves to make every man believe that they had no sight in letters, and, dissembling their cunning, made semplant their orations to be made very simply, and rather as nature and truth led them, than study and art, the which, if it had been openly known, would have put a doubt in the peoples' mind, for fear lest he beguiled them. You may see then how to show art and such bent study taketh away the grace of everything. Which of you is it that laugheth not when Messer Pietropaolo danceth after his own fashion with such fine skips and on tiptoe without moving his head, as if he were all of wood, so heedfully that truly a man would ween he counted his paces? What eye is so blind that perceiveth not in this the disgrace of curiosity, and in many men and women here present the grace of that not regarded agility and slight conveyance (for in the motions of the body many so term it) with a kind of speaking or smiling, or gesture, betokening not to pass upon it, and to mind any other thing more than that, to make a looker-on believe he can not do amiss?"

Here Messer Bernardo Bibbiena, not forbearing any longer, said: "You may see yet that our Messer Roberto hath found one to praise his manner of dancing, though the rest of you set little by it. For if this excellency doth consist in recklessness, and in showing not to pass upon and rather to mind any other thing than that a man is in hand withal, Messer Roberto hath no peer in the world. For that man should well perceive that he little mindeth it, many times his garments fall from his back, and his slippers from his feet, and he danceth on still without taking up again any of both."

Then answered the Count: "Seeing you will needs have me speak, I will say somewhat also of our vices. Do you not mark, this that you call in Messer Roberto recklessness is a very curiosity? For it is well known that he enforceth himself with all diligence possible to make a show not to mind it, and that is to mind it too much. And because he passeth certain limits of a mean, that recklessness of his is curious, and not comely, and is a thing that cometh clean contrary to pass from the drift, that is, to wit, to cover art. Therefore I judge it a no less vice of curiosity to be in recklessness, which in itself is praiseworthy, in letting a man's clothes fall off his back, than in preciseness, which likewise of itself is praiseworthy, to carry a man's head so like a malt-horse for fear of ruffling his hair, or to keep in the bottom of his cap a looking-glass, and a comb in his sleeve, and to have always at his heels up and down the streets a page with a sponge and a brush. For this manner of preciseness and recklessness is too much in the extremity, which is always a vice and contrary to that pure and amiable simplicity which is so acceptable to men's minds. Mark what an ill grace a man-at-arms hath, when he enforceth himself to go so bolt upright settled in saddle, as we use to say after the Venetian phrase, in comparison of another that appeareth not to mind it, and sitteth on horseback so nimbly and close as if he were on foot. How much more do we take pleasure in a gentleman that is a man-at-arms, and how much more worthy praise is he if he be modest, of few words, and no bragger, than another that always croketh of himself, and blaspheming with a bravery seemeth to threaten the world. And this is nothing else but a curiosity to seem to be a royster. The like happeneth usually in all exercises,

yea, and in everything in the world that a man can ever do or speak."

Then said the Lord Giuliano: "This in like manner is verified in music, where it is a very great vice to make two perfect chords, the one after the other, so that the very sense of our hearing abhorreth it, and oftentimes delighteth in a second or in a seven, which in itself is an unpleasant discord and not tolerable; and this proceedeth because the continuance in the perfect tunes engendereth irksomeness, and betokeneth a too curious harmony the which in mingling therewithal the imperfect is avoided with making, as it were, a comparison, whereby our ears stand to listen and greedily attend and taste the perfect, and are otherwhile delighted with the disagreement of the second or seven, as it were with a thing little regarded."

"Behold you, then," answered the Count, "that curiousness hurteth in this as well as in other things. They say also that it hath been a proverb among some most excellent painters of old time, that too much diligence is hurtful, and that Apelles found fault with Protogenes because he could not keep his hands from the table."

Then said the Lord Cesare: "The very same fault, methink, is in our Friar Seraphin, that he cannot keep his hands from the table, especially as long as there is any meat stirring."

The Count laughed and went forward: "Apelles' meaning was, that Protogenes knew not when it was well, which was nothing else but to reprehend his curiousness in his work. This virtue therefore, contrary to curiosity, which we for this time term recklessness, besides that it is the true fountain from the which all grace springeth, it bringeth with it also another orna-

ment, which accompanying any deed that a man doeth, how little soever it be, doth not only by-and-by open the knowledge of him that doeth it, but also many times maketh it to be esteemed much more in effect than it is, because it imprinteth in the minds of the lookers-on an opinion that whoso can so slightly do well, hath a great deal more knowledge than indeed he hath; and if he will apply his study and diligence to that he doeth, he might do it much better. And to repeat even the very same examples, mark a man that taketh weapon in hand. If going about to cast a dart, or holding in his hand a sword or any other waster, he settleth himself lightsomely, not thinking upon it, in a ready aptness with such activity that a man would ween his body and all his members were naturally settled in that disposition and without any pain, though he doeth nothing else, yet doth he declare himself unto every man to be most perfect in that exercise. Likewise in dancing, one measure, one motion of a body that hath a good grace, not being forced, doth by-and-by declare the knowledge of him that danceth. A musician, if in singing he roll out but a plain note ending in a double relish, with a sweet tune, so easily that a man would judge he did it at a venture, in that point alone he doeth men to understand that his knowledge is far greater than it is indeed. Oftentimes also in painting, one line not studied upon, one draught with the pencil slightly drawn, so it appeareth the hand, without the guiding of any study or art, tendeth to his mark according to the painter's purpose, doth evidently discover the excellency of the workman, about the opinion whereof every man afterward contendeth according to his judgment. The like happeneth also, in a manner, about every other thing. Therefore shall our Courtier

be esteemed excellent, and in everything he shall have a good grace, and especially in speaking, if he avoid curiosity; into which error many men run, and some time more than other. Certain of our Lombards, after a year's travel abroad, come home and begin by-and-by to speak the Roman tongue, and some time the Spanish tongue, or the French, and God wotteth how. And all this proceedeth of an over-great desire to show much knowledge; and in this wise a man applyeth his study and diligence to get a most odious vice. And truly it were no small travail for me, if I should use, in this communication of ours, those ancient Tuscan words that are not in use among the Tuscans nowadays, and, besides that, I believe every man would laugh at me."

Then spake Sir Federico: "Indeed, reasoning together as we now do, peradventure it were not well done to use those ancient Tuscan words; for, as you say, they would be a loathsomeness both to the speaker and to the hearer, and of many they should not be understood without much ado. But he that should write, I would think he committed an error in not using them; because they gave a great grace and authority unto writings, and of them is compact a tongue more grave and more full of majesty than of the new."

"I know not," answered the Count, "what grace and authority those words can give unto writings that ought to be eschewed, not only in the manner of speech that we now use, which you yourself confess, but also in any other manner that can be imagined. For if any man, of how good a judgment soever he were, had to make an oration of grave matters in the very Council-chamber of Florence, which is the head of Tuscany, or else to commune privately with a person of estimation in that city

about weighty affairs, or also with the familiarest friend he hath, about pleasant matters, or with women or gentlemen about matters of love, either in jesting or dallying, banqueting, gaming, or wherever else, or in any time or place or purpose—I am assured he would flee the using of those ancient Tuscan words. And in using them, besides that he should be a laughing-stock, he should bring no small loathsomeness to him that heard them. Therefore, methink it a strange matter to use those words for good in writing that are to be eschewed for naughty in every manner of speech; and to have that which is never proper in speech to be the properest way a man can use in writing, forsomuch as, in mine opinion, writing is nothing else but a manner of speech, that remaineth still after a man hath spoken, or, as it were, an image, or rather the life of the words. And therefore in speech, which as soon as the sound is pronounced vanisheth away, peradventure some things are more to be borne withal than in writing. Because writing keepeth the words in store, and referreth them to the judgment of the reader, and giveth time to examine them deeply. And therefore reason willeth that greater diligence should be had therein to make it more trim and better corrected; yet not so that the written words should be unlike the spoken, but in writing to choose out the fairest and properest of signification that be used in speaking. And if that should be lawful in writing which is not lawful in speaking, there should arise an inconvenience of it, in my judgment, very great, namely, that a man might use a greater liberty in the thing where he ought to use most diligence, and the labor he bestoweth in writing, instead of furtherance, should hinder him. Therefore it is certain whatsoever is allowed in writing is also allowed in speaking; and

that speech is most beautiful that is like unto beautiful writings. And I judge it much more behoofful to be understood in writing than in speaking, because they that write are not always present with them that read, as they that speak with them that speak. Therefore would I commend him that, besides the eschewing of many ancient Tuscan words, would apply himself also to use both in writing and speaking such as nowadays are in use in Tuscany and in other parts of Italy, and that have some grace in the pronunciation. And, in my mind, whoso followeth any other trade is not assured not to run into that curiosity so much blamed, which we have spoken of before."

Then spake Sir Federico: "I cannot deny you, Count Louis, that writing is not a manner of speaking. But this I say, if the words that are spoken have any darkness in them, that communication pierceth not the mind of him that heareth, and passing without being understood, waxeth vain and to no purpose; the which doth not happen in writing, for if the words that the writer useth bring with them a little—I will not say difficulty—but covered subtlety, and not so open, as such as be ordinarily spoken, they give a certain greater authority to writing, and make the reader more heedful to pause at it, and to ponder it better, and he taketh a delight in the wittiness and learning of him that writeth, and with a good judgment, after some painstaking, he tasteth the pleasure that consisteth in hard things. And if the ignorance of him that readeth be such that he cannot compass the difficulty, there is no blame in the writer, neither ought a man for all that to think that tongue not to be fair. Therefore, in writing, I hold opinion it is necessary for a man to use the Tuscan words, and only such as have

been used among the ancient Tuscans; for it is a great testimonial, and approved by time, that they be good and of pithy signification in that they be applied to. And beside this they have that grace and majesty that antiquity giveth not only to words, but unto buildings, images, paintings, and to everything that is of force to preserve it. And many times with this only brightness and dignity they make the form of sentences very fair, and through the virtue and elegance thereof, every matter, how base soever it be, may be so decked out that it may deserve very great commendation. But this your custom that you make so much ado of, appeareth unto me very dangerous, and many times it may be naught. And if any vice of speech be taken up of many ignorant persons, methink for all that it ought not to be received for a rule, nor followed of other.

"Besides this, customs be many and diverse, and ye have not a notable city in Italy that hath not a diverse manner of speech from all the rest. Therefore, if you take not the pains to declare which is the best, a man may as well give himself to the Bergamask tongue, as to the Florentine, and to follow your advice it were no error at all. Meseemeth, then, whoso will be out of doubt and well assured, it is requisite for him to determine with himself to follow one that by all men's accord is judged good, and to take him for a guide always and for a shield against such as will go about to find guilt, and that I think ought to be none other (I mean in the vulgar tongue) but Petrarch and Boccaccio. And whoso swerveth from these two, goeth at all aventure, as he that walketh in the dark without light, and therefore many times strayeth from the right way. But we are so hardy nowadays that we disdain to do as other good men

of ancient time have done: that is to say, to take diligent heed to following, without the which I judge no man can write well. And methink Virgil declareth a great trial of this, who, for all that with his so divine a wit and judgment, he took all hope from his posterity for any to follow him, yet would he follow Homer."

Then the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino: "This disputation," quoth he, "of writing in very deed is worth the hearing; yet were it more to our purpose if you would teach in what sort the Courtier ought to speak, for methink he hath more need of that, and he serveth his turn oftener with speaking than with writing."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "There is no doubt but so excellent and perfect a Courtier hath need to understand both the one and the other; and without these two qualities peradventure all the rest should not be much worthy praise; therefore if the Count will fulfil his charge, he shall teach the Courtier not only to speak but also to write well."

Then said the Count: "I will not, my Lord, undertake this enterprise; for it should be a great folly for me to teach another that I understand not myself. And though I were skilful in it, yet can I not see how I should think to do the thing in so few words which great clerks have scarce done with such great study and diligence, unto whose writings I would remit our Courtier, if it were so that I were bound to teach him to write and to speak."

The Lord Cesare then said: "The Lord Giuliano meaneth the speaking and writing of the vulgar tongue, and not Latin; therefore those writings of great clerks are not for our purpose. But you must show us in this behalf as much as you know; as for the rest, you shall be held excused."

"I have already said," answered the Count. "But in reasoning upon the Tuscan tongue, perhaps it were rather the Lord Giuliano's part than any man's else, to give judgment in it."

The Lord Giuliano said: "I cannot, nor of reason ought to, speak against him that saith the Tuscan tongue is fairer than all the rest. Truth it is, there are many words in Petrarch and Boccaccio worn out of use nowadays; and such would I never use, neither in speaking nor in writing; and peradventure they themselves, if they were now alive, would use them no more."

Then spake Sir Federico: "No doubt but they would use them still. And you lords of Tuscany ought to renew your tongue, and not suffer it to decay, as you do, for a man may say now that there is less knowledge in Florence than in many other places of Italy."

Then answered Messer Bernardo: "Those words that are no more in use in Florence do still continue among the men of the country, and are refused of the gentlemen for words corrupt and decayed by antiquity."

Then the Duchess: "Let us not swerve," quoth she, "from our first purpose, but let us make Count Lodovico teach the Courtier to speak and to write well, be it Tuscan or whatever else."

The Count answered: "I have already spoken, Madam, what I know. And I suppose the very same rules that teach the one may also serve to teach the other. But since you command me, I will make answer unto Sir Federico what cometh in my head; for I am of a contrary opinion to him. And peradventure I shall be driven to answer somewhat more darkly than will be allowed, but it shall be as much as I am able to say. And first I say that, to my judgment, this our

tongue, which we name the vulgar tongue, is tender and new, for all it hath been now used a long while. For in that Italy hath been, not only vexed and spoiled, but also inhabited a long time with barbarous people, by the great resort of those nations, the Latin tongue was corrupted and destroyed, and of that corruption have sprung other tongues. The which, like the rivers that depart from the top of the Apennine and run abroad toward the two seas, so are they also divided; and some dyed with the Latin speech have spread abroad sundry ways, some into one part and some into another, and one dyed with barbarousness hath remained in Italy. This then hath a long time been among us out of order and diverse, because there was none that would bestow diligence about it, nor write in it, nor yet seek to give it brightness nor any grace. Yet it hath been afterward brought into better frame in Tuscany than in the other parts of Italy. And by this it appeareth that the flower of it hath remained there ever since those first times, because that nation hath kept proper and sweet accents in the pronunciation, and an order of grammar, where it was meet, more than the other. And it hath had three noble writers, which wittily, both in the words and terms that custom did allow in their time, have expressed their conceits, and that hath happened, in my mind, with a better grace to Petrarch in matters of love, than to any of the other. Where afterward arose from time to time, not only in Tuscany, but in all Italy, among gentlemen brought up in court, in arms and in letters, some study to speak and to write more finely than they did in that first rude age, when the turmoil of the miseries that arose through barbarous nations was not as yet quieted. Many words have been left out as well in Florence it-

self, and in all Tuscany, as in the residue of Italy, and other brought in, in their stead, and made in this behalf the alteration that happenth in all worldly things; the which also hath evermore chanced in other tongues. For in case those ancient writings had lasted hitherto, we should see that Evander and Turnus and the other Latins in those days spake otherwise than did afterward the last kings of the Romans and the first consuls. You may see the verses sung by the Salii were scantly understood of their posterity; but because it was so ordained by the first inventors of it, they were not altered, for reverence of religion. So from time to time orators and poets forsook many words that had been used among their predecessors; for Antonius, Crassus, Hortensius, and Cicero eschewed many that Cato had used, and Virgil many of Ennius, and so did the rest. For albeit they had antiquity in great reverence, yet did they not esteem them so much that they would be so bound to them as you will have us now. Yea, where they thought good, they spake against them, as Horace, that sayeth his predecessors did foolishly praise Plautus, which would that we should have the authority to bring up new words. And Cicero in many places reprehendeth many of his predecessors, and to blame Servius Galba he sayeth that his orations smelled of antiquity. And he affirmeth that Ennius also, in some points, set little by his predecessors; so that if we will follow them of old time, we shall not follow them. And Virgil, that you say followed Homer, followed him not in the tongue.

"Therefore would I, for my part, always shun the use of those ancient words, except it were in certain clauses, and in them very seldom. And, in my judgment, he that useth them otherwise committeth a no less error

than whoso would, to follow them of old time, feed upon mast, where he hath now abundance of corn found out. And because you say the ancient words only with the brightness of antiquity deck out so highly every matter, how base soever it be, that it may make it worthy great commendation, I say unto you that not of these ancient words only, but of those that be good indeed, I make so small account that I suppose without the juice of fair sentences they ought of reason to be little set by. For to divide the sentences from the words is the dividing of the soul from the body, the which cannot be done, neither in the one nor in the other, without destruction ensue upon it. That therefore which is the principal matter and necessary for a Courtier to speak and write well, I believe is knowledge. For he that hath not knowledge and the thing in his mind that deserveth to be understood, can neither speak nor write it. Then must he couch in a good order that he hath to speak or to write, and afterward express it well with words; the which, if I be not deceived, ought to be apt, chosen, clear, and well applied, and, above all, in use also among the people; for very such make the greatness and gorgeousness of an oration, so he that speaketh have a good judgment and heedfulness withal, and the understanding to pick such as be of most proper signification. For he that intendeth to speak and commend, tempering them like wax after his own mind, applieth them in such part and in such order that at the first show they may set forth and do men to understand the dignity and brightness of them, as tables of painting placed in their good and natural light. And this do I say as well of writing as of speaking, wherein certain things are requisite that are not necessary in writing, as a good voice, not too subtle

or soft, as in a woman, nor yet so boisterous and rough, as in one of the country, but shrill, clear, sweet, and well framed with a prompt pronunciation and with fit manners and gestures—which, to my mind, consist in certain motions of all the body, not affected nor forced, but tempered with a mannerly countenance and with a moving of the eyes that may give a grace and accord with the words, and, as much as he can, signify also with gestures the intent and affection of the speaker. But all these things were in vain and of small account if the sentences expressed by the words should not be fair, witty, subtle, fine and grave, according to the matter."

"I doubt," said Messer Morello, "if this Courtier speak with such fineness and gravity among us, whether there will be some that will not understand him."

"Nay, every one shall understand him," answered the Count, "for fineness hindereth not the easiness of understanding. Neither will I have him to speak always in gravity, but of pleasant matters, of merry conceits, of honest devices, and of jests according to the time, and in all, notwithstanding, after a pithy manner, and with readiness and variety without confusion; neither shall he in any part show vanity or childish folly. And when he shall then commune of a matter that is dark and hard, I will have him both in words and sentences well pointed to express his judgment, and to make every doubt clear and plain after a certain diligent sort, without tediousness. Likewise, when he shall see time, to have the understanding to speak with dignity and vehemency, and to raise those affections which our minds have in them, and to inflame or stir them according to the matter; sometime with a simplicity of such meekness of mind that a man would ween Nature herself spake, to

make them tender and, as it were, drunken with sweetness, and with such conveyance of easiness that whoso heareth him may conceive a good opinion of himself, and think that he also, with very little ado, might attain to that perfection, but when he cometh to the proof shall find himself far wide. I would have our Courtier to speak and write in that sort, and not only choose gorgeous and fine words out of every part of Italy, but also I would judge him worthy praise to use some of those terms, both French and Spanish, which by our custom have been admitted. Therefore it shall not mislike me, falling so to purpose, to say *surpassare* (to excel); or to say *acertare* (to ascertain); or, *ripassare un uomo con ragionamento* (to pierce through a body with talk, meaning thereby to use a familiarity with him, and to probe him to get of him some perfect knowledge); or *un cavalier senza rimproccio* (a royal gentleman, a neat man to be about a Prince), and such other terms, so he may think to be understood. Sometime I would have him take certain words in another signification than that is proper to them, and wresting them to his purpose, as it were, graft them like a graft of a tree in a more lucky stock, to make them more sightly and fair, and, as it were, draw the matters to the sense of the very eyes, and, as they say, make them felt with the hand, for the delight of him that heareth or readeth. Neither would I have him to stick to forge new also, and with new figures of speech, deriving them featly from the Latins, as the Latins in old time derived from the Grecians.

"In case, then, of such learned men both of good wit and judgment, as nowadays may be picked out among us, there were some that would bestow their travail to write after the manner that we have spoken of, in this

tongue things worth the reading, we should soon see it in good frame and flowing with terms and good phrases, and so copious that a man might as well write in it as in any other tongue; and though it were not the mere ancient tongue, yet should it be the Italian tongue, common, plentiful and variable, and, as it were, like a delicious garden full of sundry flowers and fruits. Neither should this be a new matter; for of the four tongues that were in use among the Greek writers, picking out of every word, moods and rules as they thought meet, they raised thereby another, which was named the common tongue, and afterward all five they called with one name, the Greek tongue. And albeit the Athenian tongue was more fine, purer, and eloquenter than the rest, yet did not the good writers that were not of Athens born so affect it; but in the style of writing, and, as it were, in the smack and propriety of their natural speech, they were well enough known; neither were they any whit the less regarded for all that, but rather such as would appear over mere Athenians were always blamed for it.

"Among the Latin writers, in like case, many there were in their days much set by that were no Romans, although there appeared not in them that proper and peculiar pureness of the Roman tongue which men of another nation can very seldom attain. In times past Titus Livius was not neglected, although some one said he found in him mere Paduan; nor Virgil, for that he was reprehended that he spake not Roman. And, as you know, there were also read and much set by in Rome many writers of barbarous nations. But we, more precise a great deal than they of old time, do bind ourselves with certain new laws out of purpose; and having the

broad beaten way before our eyes, we seek through gaps to walk in unknown paths. For in our own tongue, whose office is, as all others, to express well and clearly the conceits of the mind, we delight in darkness, and, calling it the vulgar tongue, will use in it words that are not only not understood of the vulgar people, but also of the best sort of men and that men of learning, and are not used in any part, not regarding that all good writers of old time blamed such words as were refused of custom; the which you, in my mind, do not well know, for so much as you say, if any vice of speech be taken up of many ignorant persons, it ought not to be called a custom nor received for a rule of speech. And, as at other times I have heard you say, you will have again in the stead of *capitolio* we should say *campidoglio;* for *Hieronymo, Girolamo; Aldace,* for *Audace;* and for *patrone, padrone;* and such corrupt and mangled words, because they have been found so written by some ignorant Tuscan of old time, and because the men of the country speak so in Tuscany nowadays. The good use of speech, therefore, I believe ariseth of men that have wit and with learning and practice have gotten a good judgment, and with it consent and agree to receive the words that they think good, which are known by a certain natural judgment, and not by art or any manner rule.

"Do you not know that figures of speech, which give such grace and brightness to an oration, are all the abuse of grammar rules, but yet are received and confirmed by use, because men are able to make no other reason but that they delight, and to the very sense of our ears it appeareth they bring a life and sweetness? And this believe I is good custom, which the Romans, the Neapolitans, the Lombards, and the rest are as apt to re-

ceive as the Tuscans. Truth it is, in every tongue some things are always good, as easiness to be understood, a good order, variety, picked sentences, clauses well framed; and on the other side affectation and the other contrary to these are to be shunned. But of words some there are that last a good time and afterward wax stale and clean lose their grace; other some take force and creep into estimation; for as the seasons of the year make leaves and fruits to fall, and afterward garnish the trees afresh with other, even so doth time make those first words to fall, and use maketh other to spring afresh and giveth them grace and estimation, until they in like sort, consumed by little and little with the envious biting of time, come to their end, because at the last both we and whatsoever is ours are mortal. Consider with yourselves that we have no more any knowledge of the Osca tongue. The provincial tongue, that, a man may say, the last day was renowned of noble writers, now is it not understood of the inhabitants of the country. I believe therefore, as the Lord Giuliano hath said, that were Petrarch and Boccaccio at this present in life, they would not use many words that we see in their writings. Therefore, in mine opinion, it is not well done to follow them therein. Yet do I much commend them that can follow that ought to be followed; but notwithstanding I believe it be possible enough to write well without following, and especially in this our tongue, wherein we may be helped by custom, the which I will not take upon me in the Latin."

Then Sir Federico: "Why will you," quoth he, "custom should be more appraised in the vulgar tongue than in the Latin?"

"Nay, both in the one and the other," answered the

Count, "I judge custom ought to be the mistress. But forasmuch as those men unto whom the Latin tongue was as proper as is the vulgar tongue now to us, are no more in the world, we must learn of their writings that they learned by use and custom; neither does ancient speech signify anything else but an ancient custom of speech; and it were a fond matter to love the ancient speech for nothing else but to speak rather as men did speak, than as men do speak."

"Did not they then of old time follow?" answered Sir Federico.

"I believe," quoth the Count, "many did follow, but not in every point. And if Virgil had altogether followed Hesiod, he should not have passed him, nor Cicero Crassus, nor Ennius his predecessors. Behold Homer, who is so ancient that he is thought of many to be the first heroical poet as well of time as also of excellency of phrase; and whom will you have him to have followed?"

"Some other," answered Sir Federico, "more ancient than he was, which we hear not of, by reason of too much antiquity."

"Whom will you say, then, Petrarch and Boccaccio followed," said the Count, "which, a man may say, were but three days ago in the world?"

"I know not," answered Sir Federico, "but it is to be thought they in likewise bent their mind to following, though we know not of whom."

The Count answered: "A man may believe they that were followed were better than they that did follow: and it were too great a wonder that their name and renown (if they were good) should so soon be clean lost. But I believe their very master was wit and their own

natural inclination and judgment. And thereat no man ought to wonder; for (in a manner) always a man by sundry ways may climb to the top of all perfection. And there is no matter that hath not in it many things of like sort unlike the one to the other, which for all that among themselves deserve a like praise. Mark me music, wherein are harmonies sometime of bass sound and slow, and otherwhile very quick and of new devices, yet do they all recreate a man; but for sundry causes, as a man may perceive in the manner of singing that Bidon useth, which is so artificial, cunning, vehement, stirred, and such sundry melodies, that the spirits of the hearers move all and are inflamed, and so listening a man would ween they were lift up into heaven. And no less doth our Marchetto Cara move in his singing, but with a more soft harmony, that by a delectable way and full of mourning sweetness maketh tender and pierceth the mind, and sweetly imprinteth in it a passion full of great delight. Sundry things in like manner do equally please our eyes so much, that a man shall have much ado to judge in which they most delight. Behold in painting Leonardo da Vinci, Mantegna, Raphael, Michelangelo, Giorgione of Castelfranco. They are all most excellent doers, yet are they in working unlike; but in any of them a man would not judge that there wanted aught in his kind of trade: for every one is known to be of most perfection after his manner. The like is of many poets, both Greek and Latin, which being diverse in writing are alike in praise. Orators also have always had such a diversity among them, as, in a manner, every age hath brought forth and set by one sort of orators peculiar for that time, which have been unlike and disagreeing not only to their predecessors and followers but also among themselves. As

it is written among the Grecians, of Isocrates, Lysias, Eschines and many other, all excellent, but yet like unto none saving themselves. And among the Latins, Carbo, Lælius, Scipio Africanus, Galba, Sulpitius, Cotta, Graccus, Marcus Antonius, Crassus, and so many that it should be long to repeat them, all good and most diverse one from another. So that whoso could consider all the orators that have been in the world, he should find so many orators so many kinds of speech. Methink I remember also that Cicero in a place bringeth in Marcus Antonius to say unto Sulpitius that there are many that follow no man, and yet climb they to a high degree of excellency. And speaketh of certain that had brought up a new style and phrase of speaking fair, but not used of the orators of that time wherein they followed none but themselves. Therefore he affirmeth also that masters should consider the nature of their pupils, and taking it for their guide, direct and prompt them in the way that their wit and natural inclination moveth them unto.

"For this cause, therefore, Sir Federico, do I believe if a man have not an inclination unto some author, whatsoever he be, it were not well done to force him to following. Because the virtue of that disposition of his soon fainteth and is hindered, by reason that it is astray out of the way in which he would have profited, had he not been stopped in it. I know not, then, how it will stand well, instead of enriching this tongue, and of giving it majesty and light, to make it poor, slender, bare, and dark, and to seek to shut it up into so narrow a room that every man should be compelled to follow only Petrarch and Boccaccio, and that we should not also in that tongue credit Lorenzo de' Medici, Francesco Diaceto, and certain other that notwithstanding are Tus-

cans, and perhaps of no less learning and judgment than Petrarch and Boccaccio. And truly it should be a great misery to stop without wading any farther than almost the first that ever wrote; and to despair that so many and so noble wits shall never find out any more than one good manner of speech in the tongue that unto them is proper and natural. But nowadays there be some so scrupulous that, as it were, with a religion and high mysteries of this their Tuscan tongue, put as many as heareth them in such dread that they bring in like case many gentlemen and learned men into such an awe that they dare not open their mouth, and confess plainly that they cannot speak the tongue which they have learned of their nurses, even from their cradle. But in this point, methink, we have spoken too much. Therefore let us now proceed in our communication of the Courtier."

Then answered Sir Federico: "But first I will say this little, which is, that I deny not but the opinions and wits of men are diverse among themselves; neither do I judge it comely for one that is vehement and quick of nature to take in hand to write of soft and quiet matters. Nor yet for another that is severe and grave to write of merry conceits. For in this point, methink, it is reason every man should apply himself to his own proper inclination, and of this I believe spake Cicero when he said that masters should have a consideration to the nature of their pupils, lest they should do like the ill husbandman that sometime in a soil that is good only for vines will sow grain. But it will not sink into my head why in a particular tongue—which is not so proper unto all men as are discourses and conceits, and many other operations, but an invention contained under certain terms—a man may not with more reason follow

them that speak best than speak at all aventure. And that, as in the Latin tongue a man ought to apply himself to be in the tongue like unto Virgil and Cicero, rather than Silius and Cornelius Tacitus, so in the vulgar tongue why it were not better to follow the tongue of Petrarch and Boccaccio than any man's else, and therein express well his own conceits, and so apply himself, as Cicero saith, to his own natural inclination. And thus shall the difference which you say is between the good orators be found to consist in the senses and not in the tongue."

Then the Count: "I fear me," quoth he, "we shall enter into a large sea, and leave our first purpose of the Courtier. But I would know of you wherein consisteth the goodness of this tongue."

Sir Federico answered: "In keeping well the propriety of it; and in taking it in the signification, using the same style and measure, that all such have done as have written well."

"I would know then," quoth the Count, "whether this style and measure which you speak of, arise of the sentences or of the words."

"Of the words," answered Sir Federico.

"Do you not think, then," quoth the Count, "that the words of Silius and Cornelius Tacitus are the very same that Virgil and Cicero use—and taken in the same signification?"

Sir Federico answered: "They are the very same indeed, but some ill applied, and diversely taken."

The Count answered: "In case a man should pick out of a book of Cornelius and of Silius all the words placed in other signification than are in Virgil and Cicero, which should be very few, would you not then say that Cor-

nelius in the tongue were equal with Cicero, and Silius with Virgil?"

Then the Lady Emilia: "Methink," quoth she, "this your disputation hath lasted too long, and hath been very tedious; therefore it shall be best to defer it until another time."

Sir Federico began still to make answer; but Lucia Emilia always interrupted him.

At last the Count said: "Many will judge of styles and talk of numbers and measures, and of following; but they cannot do me to understand what manner a thing style and measure is, and wherein following consisteth. Nor why things taken out of Homer, or any other, are so well couched in Virgil that they appear rather amplified than followed, and peradventure the occasion thereof is that I am not able to conceive it. But because a great argument that a man understandeth a thing is the understanding that he hath to teach it, I fear me they themselves have small understanding in it, and praise Virgil and Cicero because they hear them praised of many, not for that they know the difference between them and others, which out of peradventure consisteth not in the observation of two, or three, or of ten words used after a diverse manner from other. In Sallust, in Cæsar, in Varro, and in other good writers, there are found some terms applied otherwise than Cicero applieth them, and both the one and the other doeth well enough. Because in so trifling a matter the goodness and perfection of a tongue doth not consist, as Demosthenes answered Eschines well that had taken him up, demanding him of certain words which he had used and yet were not ancient, what monsters or wondrous matters they were. Whereat Demosthenes laughed, and answered

him that the fortunes of Greece depended not upon them. Even so would I pause full little if a Tuscan should reprehend me for speaking rather *satisfatto* than *sodisfatto,* and *honorevole* than *horrevole,* and *causa,* than *cagione,* and *Populo,* than *Popolo,* and such other matters."

Then arose Sir Federico and said: "I beseech you give the hearing of these few words."

The Lady Emilia answered, laughing: "Upon my displeasure I forbid any of you to talk any more in this matter, for I will have you to break it off until another night. But you, Count, proceed you in your communication of the Courtier, and let us see how good a memory you have; for I believe, if you can knit it again where you brake off, you shall do not a little."

"Madam," answered the Count, "methink the thread is broken in sunder; but if I be not deceived, I trow we said that pestilent curiosity doth always give an ill grace unto all things; and contrarywise simplicity and recklessness a marvelous good grace. In commendation whereof, and in dispraise of curiosity, many other things might be said, yet will I allege but one more, and then have done. All women generally have a great desire to be, and when they cannot be, at the least to appear, beautiful. Therefore, where nature in some part hath not done her devoir therein, they endeavor themselves to supply it with art. Of this ariseth the trimming of the face, with such study and many times pains, the pilling of the brows and forehead, and the using of all those manner ways, and the abiding of such loathsomeness as you women believe are kept very secret from men, and yet do all men know them."

The Lady Costanza Fregosa laughed at this, and said: "You should do much better to go forward in your com-

munication, and declare how a man may attain a good grace, and speak of courting, than to discover the faults of women without purpose."

"Nay, it is much to purpose," answered the Count, "because these defaults that I talk of take this grace from you; for they proceed of nothing else but of curiousness, whereby you discover openly unto every man the over great desire that you have to be beautiful. Do you not mark how much more grace is in a woman, that if she doth trim herself, doth it so scarcely and so little, that whoso beholdeth her standeth in doubt whether she be trimmed or not, than in another so bedaubed that a man would ween she had a visor on her face and dareth not laugh for making it chap; nor at any time changeth her color, but when she appareleth herself in the morning, and all the rest of the day standeth like an image of wood without moving, showing herself only in torchlight, as crafty merchantmen do their cloths in their dark lights. How much more, then, doth a man delight in one, I mean not foul, that is manifestly seen she hath nothing upon her face, though she be not so white nor so red, but with her natural color somewhat wan, sometime with blushing or through other chance dyed with a pure redness, with her hair by hap out of order and ruffled, and with her simple and natural gestures, without showing herself to bestow diligence or study to make her fair? This is that not regarded pureness which best pleaseth the eyes and minds of men that stand always in awe to be deceived by art. White teeth is a good sight in a woman, for since they are not in so open sight as is the face, but most commonly are hid, a man may think she bestoweth not so much labor about them, to make them white, as she doth in the face; yet whoso

should laugh without cause purposely to show them, should discover the art, and for all their fair whiteness should appear unto all men to have a very ill grace, as Egnatius in Catullus. The like is in the hands, which being delicate, smooth and fair, if they be showed bare at a time when occasion is to occupy them, and not of purpose to show the beauty of them, they leave a very great desire of themselves, and especially after they are covered with gloves again; for a man would judge that in putting them on again she pauseth not and little regardeth whether they be in sight or no, and that they are so fair rather by nature than by any study or diligence. Have you not had an eye otherwhile, when either in the streets going to church, or in any other place, or by any other chance, it happeneth that a woman lifteth up her clothes so high that she showeth her foot, and sometimes a little of her pretty leg unwittingly? And seemeth she not to you to have a very good grace, if you behold her then with a certain womanly disposition, cleanly and precise, with her shoes of velvet, and her hose sitting clean to her leg? Truly it delighteth me much, and I believe all of you; for every man supposeth that preciseness, in so secret a place and so seldom seen, to be unto that woman rather natural and proper than forced, and that thereby she thinketh to get her no commendation at all. In such sort is curiousness avoided and covered, the which you may now conceive how contrary it is, and taketh away the grace of every operation and deed, as well of the body as of the mind, whereof hitherto we have spoken but little, and yet ought it not to be omitted, for as the mind is much more worthy than the body, so deserveth it also to be better decked and polished.

"And how that ought to be in our Courtier (leaving apart the precepts of so many wise philosophers that write in this matter and define the virtues of the mind, and so subtly dispute of the dignity of them), we will express in few words, applying to our purpose, that it is sufficient he be, as they term it commonly, an honest man and well meaning; for in this is comprehended the goodness, the wisdom, the manliness and the temperance of the mind, and all other qualities that belong to so worthy a name. And I reckon him only a true moral philosopher that will be good, and to that he needeth few other precepts than that will of his. And therefore said Socrates well, that he thought his instructions had brought forth good fruit when by them he had provoked any one to apply his will to the knowledge and learning of virtue. For they that are come to the point that they covet nothing more than to be good, do easily attain the understanding of all that belongeth thereto. Therefore herein we will make no more ado. But beside goodness, the true and principal ornament of the mind in every man, I believe, are letters, although the Frenchmen know only the nobleness of arms, and pass for nothing beside; so that they do not only not set by letters, but they rather abhor them, and all learned men they count very rascals, and they think it a great villainy when any one of them is called a clerk."

Then answered the Lord Giuliano: "You say very true, this error indeed hath long reigned among the Frenchmen. But if Monseigneur Angoulism have so good luck that he may, as men hope, succeed in the Crown, the glory of arms in France doth not so flourish, nor is had in such estimation, as letters will be, I believe. For it is not long since I was in France, and saw

this Prince in the court there, who seemed unto me, beside the handsomeness of person and beauty of visage, to have in his countenance so great a majesty, accompanied nevertheless with a certain lovely courtesy, that the realm of France should ever seem unto him a small matter. I understood afterward, by many gentlemen both French and Italian, very much of the most noble conditions, of the greatness of courage, prowess and liberality that was in him; and among other things it was told me that he highly loved and esteemed letters, and had in very great reputation all learned men, and blamed the Frenchmen themselves that their minds were so far wide from this profession, especially having at their doors so noble an university as Paris is, where all the world resorteth."

Then spake the Count: "It is great wonder that in these tender years only by the provocation of nature, and contrary to the manner of the country, he hath already given himself to so excellent a way. And because subjects follow almost always the conditions of the higher powers, it is possible that it may come to pass, as you say, that the Frenchmen will yet esteem letters to be of that dignity that they are indeed. The which, if they will give ear thereto, they may soon be persuaded, forsomuch as men ought to covet of nature nothing so much, and that is more proper for them, than knowledge, which thing it were a great folly to say or to hold opinion that it is not always good. And in case I might commune with them, or with other that were of a contrary opinion to me, I would do my diligence to show them how much letters, which undoubtedly have been granted of God unto men for a sovereign gift, are profitable and necessary for our life and estimation. Neither

should I want the examples of so many excellent captains of old time, which all joined the ornament of letters with the prowess of arms. For, as you know, Alexander had Homer in such reverence that he laid his Iliad always under his bed's head; and he applied diligently not these studies only, but also the speculations of philosophy under the discipline of Aristotle. Alcibiades increased his good conditions and made them greater with letters and with the instructions of Socrates. Also, what diligence Cæsar used in study, those things which he hath so divinely written himself make trial. It is said that Scipio Africanus carried always in his hand the books of Xenophon, wherein under the name of Cyrus he instructeth a perfect king. I could recite unto you Lucullus, Sylla, Pompeius, Brutus, and many other Romans and Grecians, but I will do no more than make mention of Hannibal, which being so excellent a captain (yet for all that of a fierce nature, and void of all humanity, an untrue dealer and a despiser of men and of the gods), had also understanding in letters and the knowledge of the Greek tongue. And if I be not deceived, I trow, I have read in my time that he left a book behind him of his own making, in the Greek tongue. But this kind of talk is more than needeth, for I know all you understand how much the Frenchmen be deceived in holding opinion letters to do any hurt to arms. You know in great matters and adventurous in wars the true provocation is glory; and whoso for lucre's sake or for any other consideration taketh it in hand, beside that he never doeth anything worthy praise, deserveth not the name of a gentleman, but is a most vile merchant. And every man may conceive it to be the true glory that is stored up in the holy treasure of letters,

except such unlucky creatures as have had no taste thereof. What mind is so faint, so bashful and of so base a courage, that in reading the acts and greatness of Cæsar, Alexander, Scipio, Hannibal, and so many other, is not incensed with a most fervent longing to be like them, and doth not prefer the getting of that perpetual fame, before this rotten life that lasteth two days, which in despite of death maketh him live a great deal more famous than before? But he that savoreth not the sweetness of letters, cannot know how much is the greatness of glory, which is a long while preserved by them, and only measureth it with the age of one or two men, for farther he beareth not in mind. Therefore can he not esteem this short glory so much as he would do that which in a manner is everlasting, if by his ill hap he were not barred from the knowledge of it. And not passing upon it so much, reason persuadeth, and a man may well believe he will never hazard himself to come by it, as he that knoweth it.

"I would not now some one of the contrary part should allege unto me the contrary effects to confute mine opinion withal and tell me how the Italians, with their knowledge of letters, have showed small prowess in arms from a certain time hitherto, the which nevertheless is too true. But in very deed a man may well say that the offense of a few hath brought, beside the great damage, an everlasting reproach unto all other. And the very cause of our confusion, and of the neglecting of virtue in our minds, if it be not clean dead, proceeded of them. But it were a more shameful matter unto us to publish it than unto the Frenchmen the ignorance in letters. Therefore it is better to pass that over with silence that cannot be rehearsed without sorrow, and leaving this

purpose into the which I am entered against my will, return again unto our Courtier, whom in letters I will have to be more than indifferently well seen, at the least in those studies which they call Humanity, and to have not only the understanding of the Latin tongue, but also of the Greek, because of the many and sundry things that with great excellency are written in it. Let him much exercise himself in poets, and no less in orators and historiographers, and also in writing both rhyme and prose, and especially in this our vulgar tongue. For beside the contentation that he shall receive thereby himself, he shall by this means never want pleasant entertainments with women, which ordinarily love such matters. And if by reason of his other business beside, or of his slender study, he shall not attain unto that perfection that his writings may be worthy much commendation, let him be circumspect in keeping them close, lest he make other men to laugh at him. Only he may show them to a friend whom he may trust, for at the leastwise he shall receive so much profit that by that exercise he shall be enabled to give his own judgment upon other men's doings. For truly it happeneth very seldom that a man not exercised in writing, how learned soever he be, can at any time know perfectly the labor and toil of writers, or taste of the sweetness and excellency of styles, and those inner observations that oftentimes are found in them of old time. And beside that, those studies shall make him copious, and, as Aristippus answered that Tiran, bold to speak upon a good ground with every man.

"Notwithstanding, I will have our Courtier to keep fast in his mind one lesson, and that is this, to be always wary in this and in every other point, and rather fearful

than bold, and beware that he persuade not himself falsely to know the thing he knoweth not indeed. Because we are of nature all the sort of us much more greedy of praise than is requisite, and better to our ears love the melody of words sounding to our praise than any other song or sound that is most sweet. And therefore many times, like the voices of mermaidens, they are the cause of drowning him that doth not well stop his ears at such deceitful harmony. This danger being perceived, there hath been among the ancient wise men that hath written books, how a man should know a true friend from a flatterer. But what availeth it? If there be many of them, or rather infinite, that manifestly perceive there are flatterers, and yet love him that flattereth them, and hate him that telleth them the truth, and oftentimes, standing in opinion that he that praiseth them is too scarce in his words, they themselves help him forward, and utter such matters of themselves that the most impudent flatterer of all is ashamed of. Let us leave these blind buzzards in their own error, and make our Courtier of so good a judgment that he will not be given to understand black for white, nor presume more of himself than what he knoweth very manifestly to be true, and especially in those things which, if he bear well in mind, the Lord Cesare rehearsed in his device of pastimes that we have many times used for an instrument to make many become foolish. But rather, that he may be assured not to fall into any error, where he knoweth those praises that are given him to be true, let him not so openly consent to them, nor confirm them so without resistance, but rather with modesty, in a manner, deny them clean, showing always and counting in effect arms to be his principal profession, and all the other good qual-

ities for an ornament thereof, and principally among soldiers, lest he be like unto them that in learning will seem men of war, and among men of war, learned. In this wise, for the reasons we have said, he shall avoid curiousness, and the mean things which he taketh in hand shall appear very great."

Here Messer Pietro Bembo answered: "I know not, Count Lodovico, how you will have this Courtier, being learned and of so many other virtuous qualities, to count everything for an ornament of arms, and not arms and the rest for an ornament of letters. The which without other addition are in dignity so much above arms as the mind is above the body; because the practising of them belongeth properly to the mind, even as the practising of arms doth to the body."

The Count answered then: "Nay, the practising of arms belongeth as well to the mind as to the body. But I would not have you, Messer Pietro, a judge in this cause, for you would be too partial to one of the parts. And forsomuch as this disputation hath already been tossed a long time by most wise men, we need not to renew it, but I count it resolved upon arms' side, and will have our Courtier, since I have the fashioning of him at my will, think thus also. And if you be of a contrary opinion, tarry till you hear a disputation, where it may be as well lawful for him that taketh part with arms to use his arms, as they that defend letters use in the defense the very same letters."

"Oh," quoth Messer Pietro, "you rebuked the Frenchmen before for setting little by letters, and declared what a great light of glory they show unto men, and how they make them immortal; and now it seemeth you are in another opinion. Do you not remember that—

'The great Macedo, when he proached near
Fierce Achils' famous tomb, thus said and sight:
"O happy Prince that found a Trump so clear,
And happy he that praised so worthy wight."'

And if Alexander envied Achilles, not for his deeds but for his fortune, that gave him so great luck to have his acts renowned by Homer, a man may gather he esteemed more the letters of Homer than the arms of Achilles. What other judge, then, or what other sentence look you for, as touching the dignity of arms and letters, than that which was given by one of the greatest captains that ever were?"

The Count answered: "I blame the Frenchmen because they think letters hurt the profession of arms; and I hold opinion that it is not so necessary for any man to be learned, as it is for a man of war. And these two points linked together and aided the one by the other, which is most fit, will I have to be in the Courtier. Neither do I think myself for this to be in another opinion, but, as I have said, I will not dispute which of them is most worthy praise. It sufficeth that learned men take not in hand at any time to praise any but great men, and glorious acts, which of themselves deserve praise by their proper essential virtues from whence they arise. Beside that, they are a most noble theme for writers, which is a great ornament, and partly the cause of continuance of writings that peradventure should not be so much read and set by if there wanted in them noble matter, but counted vain and of small reputation. And if Alexander envied Achilles because he was praised of him that did it, yet doth it not consequently follow that he esteemed letters more than arms. Wherein if he had known himself so far wide from Achilles, as in writing he thought all they

would be from Homer that should go about to write of him, I am sure he would much sooner have desired well doing in himself than well speaking in an other. Therefore think I that this was a close praise of himself, and a wishing for that he thought he had not, namely, the high excellency of a writer, and not for that he thought with himself he had already attained, that is to say, the prowess of arms, wherein he counted not Achilles any whit his superior, wherefore he called him happy, as it were signifying where his fame in foretime was not so renowned in the world as was the fame that by so divine a poem was clear and excellent, it proceeded not for that his prowess and deserts were not such and worthy so much praise; but it arose of fortune that had beforehand prepared for Achilles that miracle of nature for a glorious renown and trumpet of his acts. And peradventure again he minded thereby to stir up some noble wit to write of himself, declaring thereby how acceptable it should be to him, forsomuch as he loved and reverenced the holy monuments of letters, about the which we have now spoken sufficient."

"Nay, more than sufficient," answered the Lord Lodovico Pio. "For I believe there is never a vessel in the world possible to be found so big that shall be able to receive all the things that you will have in this Courtier."

Then the Count: "Abide yet a while," quoth he, "for there be many other things to be had in him yet."

Pietro of Naples answered: "After this manner Crassus de' Medici shall have great advantage of Messer Pietro Bembo."

At this they all laughed. And the Count beginning afresh: "My lords," quoth he, "you must think I am not pleased with the Courtier if he be not also a musician,

and, beside his understanding and cunning upon the book, have skill in like manner on sundry instruments. For if we weigh it well, there is no ease of the labors and medicines of feeble minds to be found more honest and more praiseworthy in time of leisure than it. And principally in courts, where, beside the refreshing of vexations that music bringeth unto each man, many things are taken in hand to please women withal, whose tender and soft breasts are soon pierced with melody and filled with sweetness. Therefore no marvel that in the old time and nowadays they have always been inclined to musicians, and counted this a most acceptable food of the mind."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "I believe music," quoth he, "together with many other vanities, is meet for women, and peradventure for some also that have the likeness of men, but not for them that be men indeed, who ought not with such delicacies to womanish their minds and bring themselves in that sort to dread death."

"Speak it not," answered the Count. "For I shall enter into a large sea of the praise of music, and call to rehearsal how much it hath always been renowned among them of old time, and counted a holy matter; and how it hath been the opinion of most wise philosophers that the world is made of music, and the heavens in their moving make a melody, and our soul framed after the very same sort, and therefore lifteth up itself and, as it were, reviveth the virtues and force of it with music; wherefore it is written that Alexander was sometime so fervently stirred with it, that, in a manner, against his will he was forced to arise from banquets and run to weapon; afterward the musician changing the stroke and his manner of tune, pacified himself again and returned from

weapon to banqueting. And I shall tell you that grave Socrates, when he was well stricken in years, learned to play upon the harp. And I remember I have understood that Plato and Aristotle will have a man that is well brought up to be also a musician; and declare with infinite reasons the force of music to be very great purpose in us, and for many causes, that should be too long to rehearse, ought necessarily to be learned from a man's childhood, not only for the superficial melody that is heard, but to be sufficient to bring into us a new habit that is good, and a custom inclining to virtue, which maketh the mind more apt to the conceiving of felicity, even as bodily exercise maketh the body more lusty, and not only hurteth not civil matters and warlike affairs, but is a great stay to them.

"Also Lycurgus in his sharp laws allowed music. And it is read that the Lacedemons, which were valiant in arms, and the Cretenses used harps and other soft instruments; and many most excellent captains of old time, as Epaminondas, gave themselves to music; and such as had not a sight in it, as Themistocles, were a great deal the less set by. Have you not read that among the first instructions which the good old man Chiron taught Achilles in his tender age, whom he had brought up from his nurse and cradle, music was one? And the wise master would have those hands that should shed so much Trojan blood, to be oftentimes occupied in playing upon the harp? What soldier is there, therefore, that will think it a shame to follow Achilles, omitting many other famous captains that I could allege? Do you not then deprive our Courtier of music, which doth not only make sweet the minds of men, but also many times wild beasts tame; and whoso savoreth it not, a man may assuredly

think him not to be well in his wits. Behold, I pray you, what force it hath, that in time past allured a fish to suffer a man to ride upon him through the tempestuous sea. We may see it used in the holy temples to render laud and thanks unto God, and it is a credible matter that it is acceptable unto Him, and that He hath given it unto us for a most sweet lightening of our travails and vexations. So that many times the boisterous laborers in the fields, in the heat of the sun, beguile their pain with rude and carterlike singing. With this the unmannerly countrywoman, that ariseth before day out of her sleep to spin and card, defendeth herself and maketh her labor pleasant. This is the most sweet pastime after rain, wind, and tempest unto the miserable mariners. With this do the weary pilgrims comfort themselves in their troublesome and long voyages. And oftentimes prisoners in adversity, in fetters, and in stocks. In like manner for a greater proof that the tunableness of music, though it be but rude, is a very great refreshing of all worldly pains and griefs, a man would judge that nature hath taught it unto nurses for a special remedy to the continual wailings of sucking babes, which at the sound of their voice fall into a quiet and sweet sleep, forgetting the tears that are so proper to them, and given us of nature in that age for a guess of the rest of our life to come."

Here, the Count pausing awhile, the Lord Giuliano said: "I am not of the Lord Gaspar's opinion, but I believe for the reasons you allege and for many other, that music is not only an ornament but also necessary for a Courtier. But I would have you declare how this and the other qualities which you appoint him are to be practised, and at what time, and in what sort. Because many

things that of themselves be worthy praise, oftentimes in practising them out of season seem most foolish. And contrarywise, some things that appear to be of small moment, in the well applying them are greatly esteemed."

Then said the Count: "Before we enter into this matter, I will talk of another thing, which for that it is of importance, in my judgment, I believe our Courtier ought in no wise to leave it out. And that is the cunning in drawing, and the knowledge in the very art of painting. And wonder you not if I wish this feat in him, which nowadays perhaps is counted an handicraft and full little to become a gentleman; for I remember I have read that the men of old time, and especially in all Greece, would have gentlemen's children in the schools to apply painting as a matter both honest and necessary. And this was received in the first degree of liberal arts, afterward openly enacted not to be taught to servants and bondmen. Among the Romans in like manner it was in very great reputation, and thereof sprung the surname of the most noble family of Fabii, for the first Fabius was surnamed Pictor, because, indeed, he was a most excellent painter, and so addicted to painting that after he had painted the walls of the Temple of Health, he writ therein his name, thinking with himself that, for all he was born in so noble a family, which was honored with so many titles of consulships and triumphs and other dignities, and was learned and well seen in the law, and reckoned among orators, to give also an increase of brightness and ornament unto his renown by leaving behind him a memory that he had been a painter. There have not in like manner wanted many other of notable families that have been renowned in this art, of the which, beside that in itself it is most noble and worthy,

there ensue many commodities, and especially in war to draw out countrys, platforms, rivers, bridges, castles, holds, fortresses, and such other matters, the which though a man were able to keep in mind, and that is a hard matter to do, yet can he not show them to others. And in very deed whoso esteemeth not this art is, to my seeming, far wide from all reason; forsomuch as the engine of the world that we behold with a large sky, so bright with shining stars, and in the middle the earth environed with the seas, severed in parts with hills, dales, and rivers, and so decked with such diverse trees, beautiful flowers and herbs, a man may say it to be a noble and a great painting, drawn with the hand of Nature and of God; the which whoso can follow in mine opinion he is worthy much commendation. Neither can a man attain to this without the knowledge of many things, as he well knoweth that trieth it. Therefore had they of old time in very great estimation both the art and the artificers, so that it came to the top of all excellency. And of this may a man gather a sufficient argument at the ancient images of marble and metal, which at this day are to be seen. And though painting be a diverse matter from carving, yet do they both arise of one self fountain, namely, of a good pattern. And even as the images are divine and excellent, so it is to be thought paintings were also, and so much the more for that they contain in them a greater workmanship."

Then the Lady Emilia, turning her unto Giancristoforo Romano that sat there among the rest: "How think you," quoth she, "to this judgment?—will you grant that painting containeth in it a greater workmanship than carving?"

Giancristoforo answered: "In my mind, carving is of

more travail, of more art, and of a more dignity than painting."

Then said the Count: "Because images are more durable, perhaps a man may say that they are of a more dignity. For sith they are made for a memory, they better satisfy the effect why they be made than painting. But beside memory, both painting and carving are made also to set out a thing, and in this point hath painting a great deal the upper hand, the which, though it be not so long lasting, to term it so, as carving is, yet doth it for all that endure a long time, and for the while it lasteth is much more sightly."

Then answered Giancristoforo: "I believe verily you think not as you speak, and all this do you for your Raphael's sake. And peradventure, too, you judge the excellency you know to be in him in painting to be of such perfection, that carving in marble cannot come to that degree. But weigh with yourself that this is the praise of the artificer and not of the art." Then he proceeded: "And I judge also both the one and the other to be an artificial following of nature. But yet I know not how you can say that the truth and propriety that Nature maketh cannot be followed better in a figure of marble or metal, wherein the members are all round, proportioned and measured as Nature herself shapeth them, than in a table, where men perceive nothing but the outward sight and those colors that deceive the eyes; and say not to me that being is not nigher unto the truth than seeming. Again, I judge carving in marble much harder, because if you make a fault it cannot be amended again, for marble connot be joined together, but you must be driven to make a new image; the which happeneth not in painting, for one may alter, put to, or diminish."

The Count said laughing: "I speak not for Raphael's sake, neither ought you to think me so ignorant a person, but I understand the excellency of Michelangelo, of you yourself, and of other men in carving of marble, but I speak of the art and not of the artificers. And you say well that both the one and the other is the following of Nature. But for all that, it is not so, that painting appeareth and carving is; for although images are all round like the lively pattern, and painting is only seen in the outward appearance, yet want there many things in images that want not in paintings, and especially lights and shadows. For flesh giveth one light, and marble another, and that doth the painter naturally follow with clear and dark, more and less, as he seeth occasion, which the graver in marble cannot do. And where the painter maketh not his figure round, he maketh the muscles and the members in round wise, so that they go to meet with the parts not seen, after such a manner that a man may very well gather the painter hath also a knowledge in them and understandeth them. And in this point he must have another craft that is greater, to frame those members, that they may seem short and diminish according to the proportion of the sight by the way of perspective, which by force of measured lines, colors, lights and shadows discover unto you also in the outward sight of an upright wall the plainness and farness, more and less, as pleaseth him. Think you it again a trifling matter to counterfeit natural colors, flesh, cloth, and all colored things? This cannot now the graver in marble do, nor yet express the grace of the sight that is in the black eyes, or in azure, with the shining of those amorous beams. He cannot show the color of yellow hair, nor the glistering of armor, nor a

dark night, nor a sea tempest, nor those twinklings and sparkles, nor the burning of a city, nor the rising of the morning in the color of roses with those beams of purple and gold. Finally, he cannot show the sky, the sea, the earth, hills, woods, meadows, gardens, rivers, cities, nor houses, which the painter doth all. For this respect, methink, painting is more noble, and containeth in it a greater workmanship than graving in marble. And among them of old time I believe it was in as high estimation as other things, the which is also to be discerned by certain little remnants that are to be seen yet, especially in places underground in Rome, but much more evidently may a man gather it by old writings, wherein is so famous and so oft mention both of the works and workmen, that by them a man may understand in what high reputation they have been always with princes and commonweals. Therefore it is read that Alexander loved highly Apelles of Ephesus, and so much that, after he had made him draw out a woman of his, naked, whom he loved most dearly, and understanding that this good painter, for her marvelous beauty, was most fervently in love with her, without any more ado he bestowed her upon him. Truly a worthy liberality of Alexander, not to give only treasures and states, but also his own affections and desires, and a token of very great love toward Apelles, not regarding, to please him withal, the displeasure of the woman that he highly loved, who it is to be thought was sore aggrieved to change so great a king for a painter. There be many other signs rehearsed also of Alexander's good will toward Apelles, but he showed plainly in what estimation he had him, when he commanded by open proclamation that no other painter should ever be so hardy to draw out his picture. Here

could I also repeat unto you the contentions of many noble painters with the greatest commendation and marvel, in a manner, in the world. I could tell you with what solemnity the emperors of old time decked out their triumphs with paintings, and dedicated them in haunted places, and how dear it cost them. And that there were some painters that gave their works freely, seeming unto them no gold or silver was enough to value them. And how a table of Protogenes was of such estimation that Demetrius, lying encamped before Rhodes, where he might have entered the city by setting fire to the place where he wist this table was, for fear of burning it, stayed to bid them battle, and so won not the city at all. And how Metrodorus, a philosopher and a most excellent painter, was sent out of Athens to Lucius Paulus to bring up his children and to deck out his triumph he had to make. And also many noble writers have written of this art, which is a token great enough to declare in what estimation it hath been.

"But I will not we proceed any farther in this communication. Therefore it sufficeth only to say that our Courtier ought also to have a knowledge in painting, since it was honest and profitable, and much set by in those days when men were of a more prowess than they are now. And though he never get other profit or delight in it, beside that it is a help to him to judge of the images, both old and new, of vessels, buildings, old coins, cameos, gravings and such other matters, it maketh him also understand the beauty of lively bodies, and not only in the sweetness of the physiognomy, but in the proportion of all the rest, as well in men as other living creatures. See, then, how the knowledge in painting is cause of very great pleasure. And this let them

think, that do enjoy and view the beauty of a woman so thoroughly that they think themselves in paradise, and yet have not the feat of painting; the which if they had, they would conceive a far greater contentation, for then should they more perfectly understand the beauty that in their breast engendereth such heart's-ease."

Here the Lord Cesare laughed and said: "I have not the art of painting, and yet I know assuredly I have a far greater delight in beholding a woman in the world than Apelles himself that was so excellent, whom you named right now, could have if he were now in life again."

The Count answered: "This delight of yours proceedeth not wholly of the beauty, but of the affection which you perhaps bear unto the woman. And if you will tell the truth, the first time you beheld that woman you felt not the thousandth part of the delight which you did afterward, though her beauty were the very same. Therefore you may conceive how affection beareth a greater stroke in your delight than beauty."

"I deny not that," quoth the Lord Cesare, "but as delight ariseth of affection, so doth affection arise of beauty; therefore a man may say, for all that, that beauty is the cause of delight."

The Count answered: "There be many other things also that beside beauty oftentimes inflame our minds, as manners, knowledge, speech, gestures, and a thousand more, which peradventure after a sort may be called beauty too, and above all the knowing a man's self to be beloved; so that, without the beauties you reason of, a man may be most fervently in love, but those loves that arise only of the beauty which we discern superficially in bodies, without doubt will bring a far greater delight

to him that hath a more skill therein than to him that hath but a little. Therefore, returning to our purpose, I believe Apelles conceived a far greater joy in beholding the beauty of Campaspe than did Alexander, for a man may easily believe that the love of them both proceeded of that beauty, and perhaps also for this respect Alexander determined to bestow her upon him that, in his mind, could know her more perfectly than he did. Have you not read of the five daughters of Croton, which, among the rest of the people, Zeuxis the painter chose to make of all five one figure that was most excellent in beauty, and were renowned of many poets, as they that were allowed for beautiful of him that ought to have a most perfect judgment in beauty?"

Here the Lord Cesare, declaring himself not satisfied nor willing to consent, by any means, that any man could taste of the delight that he felt in beholding the beauty of a certain woman, but he himself, began to speak; and then was heard a great scraping of feet in the floor with a charm of loud speaking, and upon that every man, turning himself about, saw at the chamber door appear a light of torches, and by-and-by after entered in the Lord General with a great and noble train, who was then returned from accompanying the Pope a piece of the way. And at his first entry into the palace, demanding what the Duchess did, he was certified what kind of pastime they had in hand that night, and how the task was committed to Count Lodovico to treat of courting. Therefore he hasted him as much as he could to come betime to hear somewhat. And as soon as he had saluted the Duchess and settled the rest that were risen up at his coming, he sat him down in the circle among them and certain of the chief of his train, among

which were the Marquis Phebus of Ceva, and Ghiradin brethren, Messer Hector of Rome, Vincent Calmeta, Horace Floridus, and many other.

And when all was whist, the Lord General said: "My Lords, my coming should be too hurtful, if I should hinder such good communication as I guess was even now among you. Therefore do you me not this injury to deprive both yourselves and me of this pleasure."

Then answered Count Lodovico: "I believe, my Lord, silence ought rather to please all parties than speaking. For seeing it hath been my lot this night before all other to take this travail in hand, it hath now wearied me in speaking, and I weary all the rest in hearing; because my talk hath not been worthy of this company, nor sufficient enough for the weightiness of the matter I have been charged withal, wherein, since I have little satisfied myself, I reckon I have much less satisfied others. Therefore, my Lord, your luck hath been good to come at the latter end, and now shall it be well done to give the enterprise of that is behind to another that may succeed in my room. For, whosoever he be, I know well he will much better acquit himself than I should do if I went forward with it, being thus weary as I am."

"This will I in no wise permit," answered the Lord Giuliano, "to be deceived of the promise you have made me. And I know well the Lord General will not be against the understanding of that point."

"And what promise was that?" quoth the Count.

The Lord Giuliano answered: "To declare unto us in what sort the Courtier ought to use those good conditions and qualities which you say are meet for him."

The Lord General said incontinently: "If all this be behind yet to be spoken of, methink I am come in good

season. For understanding in what sort the Courtier must use his good conditions and qualities, I shall know also what they are, and thus shall I come to the knowledge of all that have been spoken hitherto. Therefore, stick not, Count, to pay this debt, being already discharged of one part thereof."

"I should not have so great a debt to discharge," answered the Count, "if the pains were equally divided; but the fault hath been in giving a lady authority to command that is too partial."

And so smiling he beheld the Lady Emilia, which said immediately: "You ought not to complain of my partiality; yet since you do it against reason, we will give one part of this honor, which you call pains, unto an other." And turning her unto Sir Federico Fregoso, "You," quoth she, "propounded this device of the Courtier; therefore reason willeth you should say somewhat in it, and that shall be to fulfil the Lord Giuliano's request, in declaring in what sort, manner, and time the Courtier ought to practise his good conditions and qualities, and those other things which the Count hath said are meet for him."

Then Sir Federico: "Madam," quoth he, "where you will sever the sort, the time and the manner of good conditions and qualities, and the well practising of the Courtier, you will sever that can not be sundered, for it is these things that make the conditions and qualities good and the practising good. Therefore, since the Count hath spoken so much and so well, and also said somewhat of these circumstances, and prepared for the rest in his mind that he had to say, it were but reason he should go forward until he came to the end."

The Lady Emilia answered: "Set the case you were

the Count yourself, and spake that your mind giveth you he would do, and so shall all be well."

Then said Calmeta: "My Lords, since it is late, lest Sir Federico should find an excuse to utter that he knoweth, I believe it were well done to defer the rest of the communication until to-morrow, and bestow the small time that remaineth about some other pastime without ambition."

The which being agreed upon of all hands, the Duchess willed the Lady Margaret and the Lady Costanza Fregosa to show them a dance. Wherefore Barletta immediately, a very pleasant musician and an excellent dancer, who continually kept all the court in mirth and joy, began to play upon his instruments, and they, hand-in-hand, showed them a dance or two with a very good grace and great pleasure to the lookers-on. That done, because it was far in night, the Duchess rose upon her feet, and so every man, taking his leave reverently of her, departed to his rest.

BOOK SECOND

NOT without marvel many a time and often have I considered with myself how one error should arise, the which, because it is generally seen in old men, a man may believe it is proper and natural unto them; and that is, how, in a manner, all of them commend the times past and blame the times present, dispraising our doings and manners, and whatsoever they did not in their youth, affirming, moreover, every good custom and good trade of living, every virtue, finally each thing, to decline always from ill to worse. And in good sooth it seemeth a matter very wide from reason and worthy to be noted, that ripe age which with long practice is wont to make men's judgments more perfect in other things, should in this behalf so corrupt them that they should not discern that if the world waxed worse and worse, and the fathers were generally better than the children, we should long ere this time have been come to that utmost degree of ill that can not wax worse. And yet do we see, not only in our days, but also in times past, that this hath always been the peculiar vice of that age. The which is to be manifestly gathered by the writings of many most ancient authors, and especially comedy writers, which express better than the rest the trade of man's life. The cause, therefore, of this false opinion in old men, I believe, in mine opinion, is, for that years wearing away, carry also with them many commodities, and among other take away from the blood a great part of the lively spirits that altereth the complexion, and the instruments wax

feeble whereby the soul worketh her effects. Therefore the sweet flowers of delight fade away in that season out of our hearts, as the leaves fall from the trees after harvest, and instead of open and clear thought there entereth cloudy and troublous heaviness, accompanied with a thousand heart-griefs; so that not only the blood, but the mind is also feeble, neither of the former pleasures receiveth it anything else but a fast memory and the print of the beloved time of tender age, which when we have upon us, the heaven, the earth, and each thing to our seeming rejoiceth and laugheth always about our eyes, and in thought, as in a savory and pleasant garden, flourisheth the sweet springtime of mirth, so that peradventure it were not unprofitable when now, in the cold season, the sun of our life, taking away from us our delights, beginneth to draw toward the west, to lose in like case therewithal the mindfulness of them, and to find out, as Themistocles saith, an art to teach us to forget; for the senses of our body are so deceivable that they beguile many times also the judgment of the mind. Therefore, methink, old men be like unto them that, sailing in a vessel out of a haven, behold the ground with their eyes, and the vessel to their seeing standeth still and the shore goeth; and yet is it clean contrary, for the haven, and likewise the time and pleasures, continue still in their estate, and we, with the vessel of mortality flying away, go one after another through the tempestuous sea that swalloweth up and devoureth all things. Neither is it granted us at any time to come on shore again, but, always beaten with contrary winds, at the end we break our vessel at some rock. Because, therefore, the mind of old age is without order, subject to many pleasures, it can not taste them; and even as to them that be sick

of a fever when by corrupt vapors they have lost their taste, all wines appear most bitter, though they be precious and delicate indeed, so unto old men for their unaptness, wherein notwithstanding desire faileth them not, pleasures seem without taste and cold, much differing from those they remember they have proved in foretime, although the pleasures in themselves be the selfsame. Therefore when they feel themselves void of them, they blame the present time for ill, not perceiving that this change proceedeth of themselves and not of the time. And contrarywise when they call to mind the pleasures past, they remember therewithal the time they had them in, and therefore commend it for good, because to their weening it carrieth with it a savor of it, which they felt in them when it was present, by reason that in effect our minds conceive an hatred against all things that have accompanied our sorrows, and love such as have accompanied our pleasures. Upon this it cometh that unto a lover it is most acceptable some time to behold a window, though it be shut, because otherwhiles it may be his chance to see his mistress there; in like manner to see a ring, a letter, a garden, or any other place, or whatever other thing he supposeth hath been a witting testimonial of his pleasures. And contrarywise, oftentimes a fair trimmed and well decked chamber is abhorred of him that hath been kept prisoner in it, or abode therein any other sorrow. And in my days I have known some that will never drink of a cup like unto that wherein in their sickness they had taken a medicine. For even as that window, ring, or letter doth bring to the mind a sweet remembrance unto the one that so much pleaseth him, for that he imagineth it was a parcel of his pleasures, so unto the other the chamber or cup seemeth to

bring with it the memory of his sickness or imprisoning again. The very same cause, I believe, moveth old men to praise the times past and discommend the present.

Therefore, as they talk of other things, so do they also of courts, affirming such as have been in their memory to be much more excellent and far better furnished with notable men than we see them to be that are nowadays. And immediately when they enter into this kind of talk, they begin to extol with infinite praises the courts of Duke Philip, or of Duke Borso, and declare the sayings of Nicholas Piccinus, and rehearse that in those times a man should very seldom have heard of a murder committed, and no combats, no crafts nor deceits, but a certain faithful and loving good meaning among all men, and an upright dealing. And in courts at that time reigned such good conditions and such honesty that the Courtiers were, in a manner, religious folk; and woe unto him that should have spoken an ill word of another, or made but a sign otherwise than honestly to a woman. And on the other side, they say in these days everything is clean contrary, and not only that brotherly love and mannerly conversation are lost among Courtiers, but also in courts reigneth nothing else but envy and malice, ill manners, and a most wanton life in every kind of vice. They dispraise also the apparel to be dishonest and too soft. To be short, they speak against infinite things, among the which many in very deed deserve to be discommended, for it can not be excused but there are many ill and naughty men among us, and this our age is much more full of vices than was that which they commend.

But, methink, they do full ill scan the cause of this difference, and they be fond persons, because they would have all goodness in the world without any ill, which is

impossible. For since ill is contrary to good, and good to ill, it is, in a manner, necessary by contrariety and a certain counterpoise the one should underprop and strengthen the other, and where the one wanteth or increaseth, the other to want or increase also; because no contrary is without his other contrary. Who knoweth not that there should be no justice in the world, were it not for wrongs? No stoutness of courage, were there not fainthearted? No chastity, were there not unchastity? Nor health, were there not sickness? Nor truth, were there not lies? Nor happiness, were there not mischances? Therefore Socrates saith well, in Plato, that he marveleth that Æsop made not an apologus or fable, wherein he might have feigned that God, since he could never couple pleasure and sorrow together, might have knit them with an extremity, so that the beginning of the one should have been the end of the other. For we see no pleasure can delight us at any time, if sorrow goeth not before. Who can love rest well, unless he have first felt the grief of weariness? Who savoreth meat, drink, and sleep, if he have not first felt hunger, thirst, and watching? I believe, therefore, passions and diseases are given to men of nature, not principally to make them subject to them; for it were not meet that she which is the mother of all goodness should by her own purposed advice give us so many evils, but since Nature doth make health, pleasure and other goodness, consequently after these were joined diseases, sorrows and other evils. Therefore, since virtues were granted to the world for a favor and gift of nature, by-and-by were vices by that linked contrariety necessarily accompanied with them, so that, the one increasing or wanting, the other must in like manner increase or want. Therefore when our old

men praise the courts of times past because there were not in them so vicious men as some that are in ours, they do not know that there were not also in them so virtuous men as some that are in ours; the which is no wonder, for no ill is so evil as that which ariseth of the corrupt seed of goodness. And therefore where nature now bringeth forth much better wits than she did, even as they that be given to goodness do much better than did those of their time, so also they that be given to ill do much worse. Therefore it is not to be said that such as abstained from doing ill because they knew not how to do it, deserved in that case any praise; for although they did but a little ill, yet did they the worst they knew. And that the wits of those times were generally much inferior to these nowadays, a man may judge by all that hath proceeded from them—letters, paintings, statues, buildings and all other things.

Again, these old men discommend many things in us which of themselves are neither good nor bad, only because they did them not; and say it is no good sight to see young men on horseback about the streets, and especially upon mules, nor to wear furs, nor silk garments in winter, nor to wear a cap before a man be at least eighteen years of age, and such other matters, wherein truly they be much deceived. For these fashions, beside that they be commodious and profitable, are brought up by custom, and generally men delight in them, as at that time they were contented to go in their jacket, in their breechless hose, and in their low shoes with latchets, and, to appear fine, carry all day long a hawk upon their fist, without purpose, and dance without touching a woman's hand, and used many other fashions, the which, as they are now stale, so were they

at that time much set by. Therefore may it be lawful for us also to follow the custom of our times, without controlment of these old men, which going about to praise themselves, say: "Now children are not so soon crept out of the shell, but they know more naughtiness than they that were come to man's estate did in those days." Neither be they aware, in so saying, that they confirm our children to have more wit than their old men. Let them leave, therefore, speaking against our times as full of vices; for in taking away them, they take also away the virtues. And let them remember that among the good men of ancient time, whenas the glorious wits flourished in the world, which in very deed were of most perfection in every virtue, and more than manly, there were also many most mischievous, which if they had still lived, should have excelled our ill men so much in ill, as those good men in goodness, and of this do all histories make full mention.

But unto these old men I ween I have made a sufficient answer. Therefore we will leave apart this discourse, perhaps too tedious, but not altogether out of purpose; and being sufficient to have declared that the courts of our time are worthy no less praise than those that old men commend so much, we will attend to our communication that was had about the Courtier, whereby a man may easily gather in what degree the Court of Urbino was among the rest, and what manner a prince and lady they were that had such noble wits attending upon them, and how fortunate all they might call themselves that lived in that familiar fellowship. When the day following, therefore, was come, there was great and sundry talk between the gentlemen and ladies of the court upon the disputation of the night before; which

arose, a great part of it, upon the Lord General's greedy desire to understand as much as had been said in the matter, who had inquired it almost of every man; and, as it is always wont to come to pass, it was reported unto him sundry ways, for some praised one thing, some another, and also among many there was a contention of the Count's own meaning; for every man did not so fully bear in mind the matters that had been spoken.

Therefore almost the whole day was spent about talking in this, and as soon as night drew on, the Lord General commanded meat to be set on the board, and took all the gentlemen with him, and immediately after supper he repaired to the Duchess's side, who, beholding so great a company assembled sooner than they had done at other times, said: "Methink, it is a great weight, Sir Federico, that is laid upon your shoulders, and a great expectation that you must satisfy."

Here not tarrying for Sir Federico's answer, "And what great weight, I beseech you, is it?" said then Unico Aretino. "Who is so foolish that, when he can do a thing, will not do it in a fit and due time?"

Reasoning in this wise about the matter, every man sat him down in his wonted place and manner, with very heedful expectation of the propounded talk.

Then Sir Federico, turning him to Unico: "Do you not think, then, Messer Unico," quoth he, "that I am laden this night with a great and painful burden, since I must declare in what sort, manner and time the Courtier hath to practise his good conditions and qualities, and to use those other things that are already said to be meet for him?"

"Methink it is no great matter," answered Unico. "And I believe a good judgment in the Courtier is suffi-

cient for all this, which the Count said well yesterday night that he ought to have; and in case it be so, without any other precepts, I suppose he may practise well enough the thing that he knoweth in due time and after a good sort. The which to bring more particularly into rule were too hard a matter, and perhaps more than needeth, for I know not who is so fond to go about his fence, when the rest be in their music; or to go about the streets dancing the Morisco, though he could do it never so well; or going about to comfort a mother that had buried her child, to begin to talk with her of pleasant matters and merry conceits. I believe surely no gentleman will do this, unless he were clean out of his wits."

"Methink, Messer Unico," quoth Sir Federico then, "you harp too much upon your extremities. For it happeneth otherwhile a man is so fond that he remembereth not himself so easily, and oversights are not all alike. And it may be that a man shall abstain from a common folly which is too manifest, as that is you speak of, to go dance the Morisco in the market-place, and yet shall he not refrain from praising himself out of purpose, from using a noisome sauciness, from casting out otherwhile a word thinking to make men laugh, which for that it is spoken out of time will appear cold and without any grace. And these oversights often times are covered with a certain veil that suffereth a man not to forget who doeth them, unless he take no heed to them; and although for many causes our sight discerneth but little, yet for ambition's sake it is darkened in especial, for every man willingly setteth forth himself in that he persuadeth himself he knoweth, whether this persuasion of his be true or false. Therefore the well-behaving of a

man's self in this case, methink, consisteth in a certain wisdom and judgment of choice, and to know more and less what increaseth or diminisheth in things, to practise them in due time or out of season. And for all the Courtier be of so good a judgment that he can discern these differences, yet shall he the sooner compass that he seeketh, if his imagination be opened with some rule, and the ways showed him, and, as it were, the places where he should ground himself upon, than if he should take himself only to the generality. Forsomuch as therefore the Count yesterday night entreated upon courtiership so copiously and in so good a manner, he had made me truly conceive no small fear and doubt that I shall not so thoroughly satisfy this noble audience in the matter that lieth upon me to discourse in, as he hath done in that was his charge. Yet to make myself partner in what I may of his praise, and to be sure not to err, at the least in this part, I will not contrary him in any point.

"Wherefore agreeing to his opinions, and, beside the rest, as touching nobleness of birth, wit and disposition of person and grace of countenance, I say unto you that to get him praise worthily and a good estimation with all men, and favor with such great men as he shall attend upon, methink it behoofful he have the understanding to frame all his life, and to set forth his good qualities generally in company with all men without purchasing himself envy. The which how hard a matter it is of itself, a man may consider by the seldomness of such as are seen to attain to that point, because we are all the sort of us in very deed more inclined of nature to dispraise faults than to commend things well done. And a man would think that many by a certain rooted malice,

although they manifestly discern the goodness, enforce themselves with all study and diligence to find in us either a fault or at the least the likeness of a fault. Therefore it behooveth our Courtier in all his doings to be chary and heedful, and whatso he saith or doeth to accompany it with wisdom, and not only to set his delight to have in himself parts and excellent qualities, but also to order the tenor of his life after such a trade that the whole may be answerable unto these parts, and see the selfsame to be always and in everything such, that it disagree not from itself, but make one body of all these good qualities, so that every deed of his may be compact and framed of all the virtues, as the Stoics say the duty of a wise man is; although notwithstanding always one virtue is the principal, but all are so knit and linked one to another that they tend to one end, and all may be applied and serve to every purpose. Therefore it behooveth he have the understanding to set them forth, and by comparison and, as it were, contrariety of the one, some time to make the other the better known; as the good painters with a shadow make the lights of high places to appear, and so with light make low the shadows of plains, and meddle divers colors together, so that through that diversity both the one and the other are more sightly to behold, and the placing of the figures contrary the one to the other is a help to them to do the feat that the painter's mind is to bring to pass. So that lowliness is much to be commended in a gentleman that is of prowess and well seen in arms; and as that fierceness seemeth the greater when it is accompanied with sober mood, even so doth sober mood increase and show itself the more through fierceness.

"Therefore little speaking, much doing, and not prais-

ing a man's own self in commendable deeds, dissembling them after an honest sort, doth increase both the one virtue and the other in a person that can discreetly use this trade; and the like is to be said in all the other good qualities. Therefore will I have our Courtier in that he doeth or sayeth to use certain general rules, the which, in my mind, contain briefly as much as belongeth to me to speak. And for the first and chief let him avoid, as the Count said well in that behalf yesternight, above all things curiosity. Afterward let him consider well what the thing is he doeth or speaketh, the place where it is done, in presence of whom, in what time, the cause why he doeth it, his age, his profession, the end whereto it tendeth, and the means that may bring him to it; and so let him apply himself discreetly with these advertisements to whatsoever he mindeth to do or speak."

After Sir Federico had thus said, he seemed to stay a while.

Then said Messer Morello of Ortona: "Methink these your rules teach but little. And I for my part am as skilful now as I was before you spake them, although I remember I have heard them at other times also of friars with whom I have been in confession, and I ween they term them circumstances."

Then laughed Sir Federico and said: "If you do well bear in mind, the Count willed yesternight that the chief profession of the Courtier should be in arms, and spake very largely in what sort he should do it, therefore will we make no more rehearsal thereof; yet by our rule it may be also understood that where the Courtier is at a skirmish, or assault, or battle upon the land, or in such other places of enterprise, he ought to work the matter wisely in separating himself from the multitude, and

undertake his notable and bold feats which he hath to do with as little company as he can and in the sight of noble men that be of most estimation in the camp, and especially in the presence and, if it were possible, before the very eyes of his king or great personage he is in service withal; for indeed it is meet to set forth to the show things well done. And I believe even as it is an ill matter to seek a false renown, and in the thing he deserveth no praise at all, so is it also an ill matter to defraud a man's self of his due estimation, and not to seek that praise which alone is the true reward of virtuous enterprises. And I remember I have known of them in my time that for all they were of prowess yet in this point they have showed themselves but gross-headed, and put their life in as great hazard to go take a flock of sheep, as in being the foremost to scale the walls of a battered town, the which our Courtier will not do if he bear in mind the cause that bringeth him to the war, which ought to be only his estimation. And if he happen, moreover, to be one to show feats of chivalry in open sights at tilt, tourney, or *joco di canne,* or in any other exercise of the person, remembering the place where he is, and in presence of whom, he shall provide beforehand to be in his armor no less handsome and sightly than sure, and feed the eyes of the lookers-on with all things that he shall think may give him a good grace, and shall do his best to get him a horse set out with fair harness and sightly trappings, and to have proper devices, apt poesies, and witty inventions that may draw unto him the eyes of the lookers-on, as the adamant stone doth iron. He shall never be among the last that come forth into the lists to show themselves, considering the people, and especially women, take much

more heed to the first than to the last; because the eyes and minds that at the beginning are greedy of that novelty, note every little matter and print it, afterward by continuance they are not only full but weary of it. Therefore was there a noble stage-player in old time that for this respect would always be the first to come forth to play his part. In like manner also if our Courtier do but talk of arms, he shall have an eye to the profession of them he talketh withal, and according to that frame himself, and use one manner of talk with men, and another with women; and in case he will touch anything sounding to his own praise, he shall do it so dissemblingly as it were at a chance and by the way and with the discretion and wariness that Count Lodovico showed us yesterday.

"Do you not now think, Messer Morello, that our rules can teach somewhat? Trow you not that friend of ours I told you of a few days ago had clean forgotten with whom he spake and why? When, to entertain a gentlewoman whom he never saw before, at his first entering in talk with her, he began to tell how many men he had slain, and what a hardy fellow he was, and how he could play at two-handsword, and had never done until he had taught her how to defend certain strokes with a pollaxe being armed, and how unarmed, and to show how, in a man's defense, to lay hand upon a dagger, so that the poor gentlewoman stood upon thorns, and thought an hour a thousand years till she were got from him, for fear that he would go nigh to kill her as he had done those other. Into these errors run they that have not an eye to the circumstances which you say you have heard of friars. Therefore I say of the exercises of the body, some there are that,

in manner, are never practised but in open show, as running at tilt, barriers, *joco di canne,* and all the rest that depend upon arms. Therefore when our Courtier taketh any of these in hand, first he must provide to be so well in order for horse, harness, and other furnitures belonging thereto, that he want nothing. And if he see not himself thoroughly furnished in all points, let him not meddle at all. For if he do not well, it can not be excused that it is not his profession. After this, he ought to have a great consideration in presence of whom he showeth himself, and who be his matches. For it were not meet that a gentleman should be present in person and a doer in such a matter in the country, where the lookers-on and the doers were of a base sort."

Then said the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino: "In our country of Lombardy these matters are not passed upon; for you shall see there young gentlemen upon the holy days come dance all the day long in the sun with them of the country, and pass the time with them in casting the bar, in wrestling, running and leaping. And I believe it is not ill done. For no comparison is there made of nobleness of birth, but of force and sleight, in which things many times the men of the country are not a whit inferior to gentlemen, and it seemeth this familiar conversation containeth in it a certain lovely freeness."

"This dancing in the sun," answered Sir Federico, "can I in no case away withal; and I cannot see what a man shall gain by it. But whoso will wrestle, run and leap with men of the country, ought, in my judgment, to do it after a sort, to prove himself and, as they are wont to say, for courtesy, not to try mastery with them; and a man ought, in a manner, to be assured to get

the upper hand, else let him not meddle withal, for it is too ill a sight and too foul a matter and without estimation to see a gentleman overcome by a carter, and especially in wrestling. Therefore I believe it is well done to abstain from it, at the leastwise in the presence of many, because if he overcome his gain is small, and his loss in being overcome very great. Also they play at tennis, in manner, always in open sight, and this is one of the common games which the multitude with their presence much set forth. I will have our Courtier therefore to do this and all the rest beside handling his weapon, as a matter that is not his profession, and not seem to seek or look for any praise for it, nor be acknowledged that he bestoweth much study or time about it, although he do it excellently well. Neither shall he be like unto some that have a delight in music, and in speaking with whomsoever always, when he maketh a pause in their talk, begin in a voice as though they would sing. Other, walking in the streets or in the churches, go always dancing. Other, meeting in the market-place or wheresoever any friend, make a gesture as though they would play at fence, or wrestle, according as their delight is."

"Here," said the Lord Cesare Gonzaga, "we have in room a young Cardinal that doeth better than so, which feeling himself lusty of person leadeth as many as come to visit him, though he never saw them before, into a garden, and is very instant upon them to strip themselves into their doublet to leap with him."

Sir Federico laughed, afterward he proceeded: "There be some other exercises that may be done both openly and privately, as dancing; and in this I believe the Courtier ought to have a respect, for if he danceth in

the presence of many and in a place full of people, he must, in my mind, keep a certain dignity, tempered notwithstanding with a handsome and sightly sweetness of gestures, and for all he feeleth himself very nimble and to have time and measure at will, yet let him not enter into that swiftness of feat and doubled footings, that we see are very comely in our Barletta, and peradventure were unseemly for a gentleman, although privately in a chamber together, as we be now, I will not say but he may do both that, and also dance the Morisco and brawls, yet not openly unless he were in a mask. And though it were so that all men knew him, it skilleth not, for there is no way to that, if a man will show himself in open sights about such matters, whether it be in arms or out of arms. Because to be in a mask bringeth with it a certain liberty and license, that a man may among other things take upon him the form of that he hath best skill in, and use bent, study and preciseness about the principal drift of the matter wherein he will show himself, and a certain recklessness about that is not of importance, which augmenteth the grace of the thing, as it were to disguise a young man in an old man's attire, but so that his garments be not a hindrance to him to show his nimbleness of person. And a man-at-arms in form of a weald shepherd, or some other such kind of disguising, but with an excellent horse and well trimmed for the purpose. Because the mind of the lookers-on runneth forthwith to imagine the thing that is offered up to the eyes at the first show, and when they behold afterward a far greater matter to come of it than they looked for under that attire, it delighteth them, and they take pleasure at it. Therefore it were not meet in such pastimes and open shows, where they

take up counterfeiting of false visages, a prince should take upon him to be like a prince indeed, because, in so doing, the pleasure that the lookers-on receive at the novelty of the matter should want a great deal, for it is no novelty at all to any man for a prince to be a prince. And when it is perceived that beside his being a prince, he will also bear the shape of a prince, he loseth the liberty to do all those things that are out of the dignity of a prince. And in case any contention should happen, especially with weapon, in these pastimes, he might easily make men believe that he keepeth the person of a prince because he will not be beaten, but spared of the rest; beside that, doing in sport the very same he should do in earnest when need required, it would take away his authority indeed and would appear in like case to be play also. But in this point the prince, stripping himself of the person of a prince, and mingling himself equally with his underlings, yet in such wise that he may be known, with refusing superiority, let him challenge a greater superiority, namely, to pass other men, not in authority, but in virtue, and declare that his prowess is not increased by his being a prince.

"Therefore I say that the Courtier ought in these open sights of arms to have the selfsame respect according to his degree. But in vaulting, wrestling, running and leaping, I am well pleased he flee the multitude of people, or at the least be seen very seldomtimes. For there is nothing so excellent in the world that the ignorant people have not their fill of, and small the regard in often beholding it. The like judgment I have in music; but I would not our Courtier should do as many do, that as soon as they come to any place, and also

in the presence of great men with whom they have no acquaintance at all, without much entreating set out themselves to show as much as they know—yea and many times that they know not—so that a man would ween they came purposely to show themselves for that, and that it is their principal profession. Therefore let our Courtier come to show his music as a thing to pass the time withal, and as he were enforced to do it, and not in the presence of noble men, nor of any great multitude. And for all he be skilful and doth well understand it, yet will I have him to dissemble the study and pains that a man must needs take in all things that are well done. And let him make semblant that he esteemeth but little in himself that quality, but in doing it excellently well make it much esteemed of other men."

Then said the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino: "There are many sorts of music, as well in the breast as upon instruments, therefore would I gladly learn which is the best, and at what time the Courtier ought to practise it."

"Methink," answered Sir Federico, "pricksong is a fair music, so it be done upon the book surely and after a good sort. But to sing to the lute is much better, because all the sweetness consisteth in one alone, and a man is much more heedful and understandeth better the feat manner and the air or vein of it, when the ears are not busied in hearing any more than one voice; and, beside, every little error is soon perceived; which happeneth not in singing with company, for one beareth out another. But singing to the lute with the ditty, methink, is more pleasant than the rest, for it addeth to the words such a grace and strength that it is a great wonder. Also all instruments with frets are full of harmony, because the tunes of them are very perfect, and

with ease a man may do many things upon them that fill the mind with the sweetness of music. And the music of a set of viols doth no less delight a man, for it is very sweet and artificial. A man's breast giveth a great ornament and grace to all these instruments, in the which I will have it sufficient that our Courtier have an understanding. Yet the more cunninger he is upon them, the better it is for him, without meddling much with the instruments that Minerva and Alcibiades refused, because it seemeth they are noisome. Now as touching the time and season when these sorts of music are to be practised: I believe at all times when a man is in familiar and loving company, having nothing else to do. But especially they are meet to be practised in the presence of women, because those sights sweeten the minds of the hearers, and make them the more apt to be pierced with the pleasantness of music, and also they quicken the spirits of the very doers. I am well pleased, as I have said, they flee the multitude, and especially of the unnoble. But the seasoning of the whole must be discretion, because in effect it were a matter impossible to imagine all cases that fall. And if the Courtier be a righteous judge of himself, he shall apply himself well enough to the time, and shall discern when the hearers' minds are disposed to give ear and when they are not.

"He shall know his age, for, to say the truth, it were no meet matter, but an ill sight, to see a man of any estimation being old, hoarheaded and toothless, full of wrinkles, with a lute in his arms playing upon it and singing in the midst of a company of women, although he could do it reasonably well. And that, because such songs contain in them words of love, and in old men

love is a thing to be jested at, although otherwhile he seemeth, among other miracles of his, to take delight in spite of years to set afire frozen hearts."

Then answered the Lord Giuliano; "Do you not bar poor old men from this pleasure, Sir Federico; for in my time I have known men of years have very perfect voices and most nimble fingers for instruments, much more than some young men."

"I go not about," quoth Sir Federico, "to bar old men from this pleasure, but I will bar you these ladies from laughing at that folly. And in case old men will sing to the lute, let them do it secretly, and only to rid their minds of those troublesome cares and grievous disquietings that our life is full of, and to taste of that excellency which I believe Pythagoras and Socrates favored in music. And set case they exercise it not at all: for that they have gotten a certain habit and custom of it, they shall savor it much better in hearing than he that hath no knowledge in it. For like as the arms of a smith that is weak in other things, because they are more exercised, be stronger than another body's that is sturdy but not exercised to work with his arms. even so the ears that be exercised in music do much better and sooner discern it, and with more pleasure judge of it, than other, how good and quick soever they be that have not been practised in the variety of pleasant music; because those musical tones pierce not, but without leaving any taste of themselves pass by the ears not accustomed to hear them, although the very wild beasts feel some delight in melody. This is therefore the pleasure meet for old men to take in music. The selfsame I say of dancing, for indeed these exercises ought to be left off before age constraineth us."

"It is better, then," answered here Messer Morello, half chafed, "to except all old men, and to say that only young men are to be called Courtiers."

Then laughed Sir Federico and said: "Note, Messer Morello, whether such as delight in these matters, if they be not young men, do not study to appear young, and therefore dye their hair and shave, twice a week, and this proceedeth upon that Nature saith to them in secret, that these matters are not comely but for young men."

All the ladies laughed, because they knew these words touched Messer Morello, and he seemed somewhat out of patience at the matter.

"Yet there are other entertainments with women," said immediately Sir Federico, "meet for old men."

"And what be these?" quoth Messer Morello—"to tell fables?"

"And that too," answered Sir Federico. "But every age, as you know, carrieth with him his thoughts, and hath some peculiar virtue and some peculiar vice. And old men, for all they are ordinarily wiser than young men and of a better foresight, yet are they withal more lavish in words, more greedy, harder to please, more fearful, always chafing in the house, sharp to their children, and will have every man wedded to their will. And contrarywise, young men are hardy, easy to be entreated, but more apt to brawling and chiding, wavering and unsteadfast, that love and unlove all at a time; given to all their delights, and enemies to them that tell them of their profit. But of all the other ages, man's estate is most temperate which hath now done with the cursed pranks of youth, and not yet grown to ancienty. These, then, that be placed, as it were, in the extremities,

it is behoofful for them to know how to correct the vices with reason, that Nature hath bred in them.

"Therefore ought old men to take heed of much praising themselves, and of the other vices, that we have said are proper to them, and suffer the wisdom and knowledge to bear stroke in them that they have gotten by long experience, and be, as it were, oracles, to the which every man should haunt for counsel, and have a grace in uttering that they know, applying it aptly to the purpose, accompanying with the grace of years a certain temperate and merry pleasantness. In this wise shall they be good Courtiers, and be well entertained with men and women, and every man will at all times be glad of their company, without singing or dancing; and when need requireth they shall show their prowess in matters of weight. The very same respect and judgment shall young men have, not in keeping the fashion of old men—for what is meet for the one, were not in all points so fit for the other, and it is a common saying, too much gravity in young men is an ill sign—but in correcting the natural vices in them. Therefore delight I in a young man, and especially a man-at-arms, if he have a certain sageness in him and few words, and somewhat demure, without those busy gestures and unquiet manners which we see so many times in that age; for they seem to have a certain gift above other young men. Beside that, this mild behavior containeth in it a kind of sightly fierceness, because it appeareth to be stirred, not of wrath but of judgment, and rather governed by reason than appetite; and this, in manner, always is known in all men of stomach, and we see it likewise in brute beasts, that have a certain noble courage and stoutness above the rest, as the lion and the eagle; neither

is it void of reason, forsomuch as that violent and sudden motion without words or other token of choler which with all force bursteth out together at once, as it were the shot of a gun, from quietness, which is contrary to it, is much more violent and furious than that which increaseth by degrees and waxeth hot by little and little.

"Therefore such as going about some enterprise are so full of words that they leap and skip and cannot stand still, it appeareth they be ravished in those matters, and, as our Messer Pietro Monte sayeth well, they do like children, that going in the night sing for fear, as though that singing of theirs should make them pluck up their spirits to be the bolder. Even as therefore in a young man a quiet and ripe youth is to be commended, because it appeareth that lightness, which is the peculiar vice of that age, is tempered and corrected, even so in an old man a green and lively old age is much to be esteemed, because it appeareth that the force of the mind is so much that it heateth and giveth a certain strength to that feeble and cold age, and maintaineth it in that middle state which is the better part of our life. But, in conclusion, all these good qualities shall not suffice our Courtier to purchase him the general favor of great men, gentlemen and ladies, if he have not also a gentle and loving behavior in his daily conversation. And of this I believe verily it is a hard matter to give any manner rule, for the infinite and sundry matters that happen in practising one with another; forsomuch as, among all the men in the world, there are not two to be found that in every point agree in mind together. Therefore he that must be pliable to be conversant with so many, ought to guide himself with his

own judgment. And knowing the difference of one man and another, every day alter fashion and manner according to the disposition of them he is conversant withal. And for my part I am not able in this behalf to give him other rules than the aforesaid, which our Messer Morello learned of a child in confessing himself."

Here the Lady Emilia laughed, and said: "You would rid your hands of painstaking, Sir Federico, but you shall not escape so, for it is your part to minister talk until it be bedtime."

"And what if I have nothing to say, Madam? How then?" answered Sir Federico.

The Lady Emilia said: "We shall now try your wit. And if all be true I have heard, there have been men so witty and eloquent that they have not wanted matter to make a book in the praise of a fly, other in the praise of a quartain fever, another in the praise of baldness; doth not your heart serve you to find out somewhat to say for one night of Courting?"

"We have already," answered Sir Federico, "spoken as much as will go nigh to make two books. But since no excuse shall serve me, I will speak until you shall think I have fulfilled, though not my duty, yet my power. I suppose the conversation which the Courtier ought chiefly to be pliable unto with all diligence to get him favor, is the very same that he shall have with his prince. And although this name of conversation bringeth with it a certain equality that a man would not judge can reign between the master and the servant, yet will we so term it for this once. I will have our Courtier, therefore, beside that he hath and doth daily give men to understand that he is of the prowess which we have said ought to be in him, to turn all his thoughts and force of

mind to love, and, as it were, to reverence the prince he serveth above all other things, and in his will, manners and fashions, to be altogether pliable to please him."

Here without any longer stay, Pietro da Napoli said: "Of these Courtiers nowadays you shall find enough, for, methink, in few words you have painted us out a jolly flatterer."

"You are far deceived," answered Sir Federico, "for flatterers love not their Lords nor their friends, the which I say unto you I will have principally in our Courtier; and to please him and to obey his commandments whom he serveth, may be done without flattery, for I mean the commandments that are reasonable and honest, or such as of themselves are neither good nor bad, as is gaming and pastime and giving himself more to some one exercise than to another. And to this will I have the Courtier to frame himself, though by nature he were not inclined to it; so that whensoever his lord looketh upon him, he may think he hath to talk with him of a matter that he will be glad to hear. The which shall come to pass if there be a good judgment in him to understand what pleaseth his prince and a wit and wisdom to know how to apply it, and a bent will to make him pleased with the thing which perhaps by nature should displease him. And having these principles, he shall never be sad before his prince, nor melancholy, nor so solemn as many, that a man would ween were at debate with their lords, which is truly an hateful matter. He shall not be ill-tongued, and especially against his superiors, which happeneth oftentimes; for it appeareth that there is a storm in courts that carrieth this condition with it, that always look who receiveth most benefits at his lord's hands, and, promoted from

very base degree to high estate, he is evermore complaining and reporteth worst of him; which is an uncomely thing, not only for such as these be, but even for such as be ill-handled indeed. Our Courtier shall use no fond sauciness. He shall be no carrier about of trifling news. He shall not be overseen in speaking otherwhile words that may offend, where his intent was to please. He shall not be stubborn and full of contention, as some busy bodies that a man would ween had none other delight but to vex and stir men like flies, and take upon them to contrary every man spitefully without respect. He shall be no babbler, not given to lightness, no liar, no boaster, nor fond flatterer, but sober, and keeping him always within his bounds, use continually, and especially abroad, the reverence and respect that becometh the servant toward the master. And shall not do, as many that meeting a prince how great soever he be, if they have once spoken with him before, come toward him with a certain smiling and friendly countenance, as though they would make of one their equal, or show favor to an inferior of theirs. Very seldom or, in manner, never shall he crave anything of his lord for himself, lest the lord, having respect to deny it him for himself, should happen to grant it him with displeasure, which is far worse. Again in suing for others, he shall discreetly observe the times, and his suit shall be for honest and reasonable matters, and he shall so frame his suit, in leaving out those points that he shall know will trouble him, and in making easy after a comely sort the lets, that his lord will evermore grant it him; and though he deny it, he shall not think to have offended him whom he meant not to do, for, because great men oftentimes after they have

denied request to one that hath sued to them with great instance, think the person that labored to them so earnestly for it, was very greedy of it, and therefore, in not obtaining it, hath cause to bear him ill will that denied him it, and upon this suspicion they conceive an hatred against that person, and can never afterward brook him nor afford him good countenance. He shall not covet to press into the chamber or other secret places where his lord is withdrawn, unless he be bid, for all he be of great authority with him; because great men oftentimes, when they are privately gotten alone, love a certain liberty to speak and do what they please, and therefore will not be seen or heard of any person that may lightly deem of them, and reason willeth no less. Therefore such as speak against great men for making of their chamber persons of no great quality in other things but in knowing how to attend about their person, methink, commit an error; because I can not see why they should not have the liberty to refresh their minds which we ourselves would have to refresh ours. But in case the Courtier that is inured with weighty affairs happen to be afterward secretly in chamber with him, he ought to change his coat and to defer grave matters till another time and place, and frame himself to pleasant communication, and such as his lord will be willing to give ear unto, lest he hinder that good mood of his. But herein and in all other things, let him have an especial regard that he be not cumbrous to him. And let him rather look to have favor and promotion offered him, than crave it so openly in the face of the world, as many do, that are so greedy of it that a man would ween the not obtaining it grieveth them as much as the loss of life; and if they chance to enter into any

displeasure, or else see other in favor, they are in such anguish of mind that they can by no means dissemble the malice, and so make all men laugh them to scorn; and many times they are the cause that great men favor some one, only to spite them withal. And afterward if they happen to enter in favor that passeth a mean, they are so drunken with it that they know not what to do for joy; and a man would ween that they wist not what were become of their feet and hands, and, in a manner, are ready to call company to behold them and to rejoice with them, as a matter they have not been accustomed withal.

"Of this sort I will not have our Courtier to be. I would have him esteem favor and promotion, but for all that, not to love it so much that a man should think he could not live without it. And when he hath it, let him not show himself new or strange in it, nor wonder at it when it is offered him, nor refuse it in such sort as some that for very ignorance receive it not, and so make men believe that they acknowledge themselves unworthy of it. Yet ought a man always to humble himself somewhat under his degree, and not receive favor and promotions so easily as they be offered him, but refuse them modestly, showing he much esteemeth them, and after such a sort that he may give him an occasion that offereth them to offer them with a great deal more instance; because the more resistance a man maketh in such manner to receive them, the more doth he seem to the prince that giveth them to be esteemed, and that the benefit which he bestoweth is so much the more, as he that receiveth it seemeth to make of it, thinking himself much honored thereby. And these are the true and perfect promotions that make men esteemed of such

as see them abroad; because when they are not craved, every man conjectureth they arise of true virtue, and so much the more as they are accompanied with modesty."

Then said the Lord Cesare Gonzaga: "Methink you have this clause out of the Gospel where it is written: 'When thou art bid to a marriage, go and sit thee down in the lowest room, that when he cometh that bid thee, he may say "Friend, come higher," and so shall it be an honor for thee in the sight of the guests.'"

Sir Federico laughed and said: "It were too great a sacrilege to steal out of the Gospel. But you are better learned in Scripture than I was aware of." Then he proceeded: "See into what danger they fall sometime, that rashly before a great man enter into talk unrequired; and many times that lord, to scorn them withal, maketh no answer and turneth his head to the other hand; and in case he doth make answer, every man perceiveth it is done full scornfully. Therefore to purchase favor at great men's hands, there is no better way than to deserve it. Neither must a man hope, when he seeth another in favor with a prince, for whatsoever matter, in following his steps to come to the same, because every thing is not fit for every man. And you shall find otherwhile some one that by nature is so ready in his merry jests that whatever he speaketh bringeth laughter with it, and a man would ween that he were born only for that; and if another that hath a grave fashion in him, of how good a wit soever he be, attempt the like, it will be very cold and without any grace, so that he will make a man abhor to hear him, and in effect will be like the ass that to counterfeit the dog would play with his master. Therefore it is meet each man know himself and his own disposition, and apply himself thereto, and con-

sider what things are meet for him to follow and what are not."

"Before you go any farther," said here Messer Vincenzo Calmeta, "if I have well marked, methought you said right now that the best way to purchase favor is to deserve it; and the Courtier ought rather to tarry till promotions be offered him than presumptuously to crave them. I fear me lest this rule be little to purpose, and methink experience doeth us very manifestly to understand the contrary; because nowadays very few are in favor with princes but such as be malapert. And I wote well you can be a good witness of some that, perceiving themselves in small credit with their princes, are come up only with presumption. And for such as come to promotion with modesty, I for my part know none, and if I give you respite to bethink yourself, I believe you will find out but few. And if you mark the French Court, which at this day is one of the noblest in all Christendom, you shall find that all such as are generally in favor there have in them a certain malapertness, and that not only one with another, but with the King himself."

"Do you not so say," answered Sir Federico, "for in France there are very modest and courteous gentlemen. Truth it is, that they use a certain liberty and familiarity without ceremonies, which is proper and natural unto them, and therefore it ought not to be termed malapertness. For in that manner of theirs, although they laugh and jest at such as be malapert, yet do they set much by them that seem to them to have any prowess or modesty in them."

Calmeta answered: "Mark the Spaniards that seem the very masters of courtly fashions, and consider how

many you find that with women and great men are not most malapert, and so much worse than the Frenchmen, in that at the first show they declare a certain modesty. And no doubt but they be wise in so doing, because, as I have said, the great men of our time do all favor such as are of these conditions."

Then answered Sir Federico: "I can not abide, Messer Vincenzo, that you should defame in this wise the great men of our time; because there be many notwithstanding that love modesty; the which I do not say of itself is sufficient to make a man esteemed, but I say unto you, when it is accompanied with great prowess it maketh him much esteemed that hath it. And though of itself it lie still, the worthy deeds speak at large, and are much more to be wondered at than if they were accompanied with presumption or rashness. I will not now deny but many Spaniards there be full of malapertness; but I say unto you, they that are best esteemed, for the most part are very modest. Again, some other there be also so cold that they flee the company of men too out of measure, and pass a certain degree of mean; so that they make men deem them either too fearful or too highminded. And this do I in no case allow, neither would I have modesty so dry and withered that it should become rudeness. But let the Courtier, when it cometh to purpose, be well spoken, and in discourses upon states, wise and expert; and have such a judgment that he may frame himself to the manners of the country wherever he cometh. Then in lower matters, let him be pleasantly disposed, and reason well upon every matter, but in especial tend always to goodness—no envious person, no carrier of an ill tongue in his head, nor at any time given to seek preferment or pro-

motion any naughty way, nor by the mean of any subtle practice."

Then said Calmeta: "I will assure you all the other ways are much more doubtful and harder to compass than is that you discommend; because nowadays, to rehearse it again, great men love none but such as be of that condition."

"Do you not so say," answered then Sir Federico, "for that were too plain an argument that the great men of our time were all vicious and naughty, which is untrue, for some there be that be good. But if it fell to our Courtier's lot to serve one that were vicious and wicked, as soon as he knoweth it let him forsake him, lest he taste of the bitter pain that all good men feel that serve the wicked."

"We must pray unto God," answered Calmeta, "to help us to good; for when we are once with them, we must take them with all their faults, for infinite respects constrain a gentleman after he is once entered into service with a lord, not to forsake him. But the ill luck is in the beginning; and Courtiers in this case are not unlike unlucky fools bred up in an ill vale."

"Methink," quoth Sir Federico, "duty ought to prevail before all other respects, but yet so a gentleman forsake not his lord at the war or in any other adversity, and be thought to do it to follow fortune, or because he wanted a mean to profit by, at all other times I believe he may with good reason, and ought to, forsake that service that among good men shall put him to shame, for all men will imagine that he that serveth the good is good, and he that serveth the ill is ill."

"I would have you to clear me of one doubt that I have in my head," quoth then the Lord Lodovico Pio,

"namely, whether a gentleman be bound or no, while he is in his prince's service, to obey him in all things which he shall command, though they were dishonest and shameful matters."

"In dishonest matters we are not bound to obey anybody," answered Sir Federico.

"And what," replied the Lord Lodovico Pio, "if I be in service with a prince who handleth me well, and hopeth that I will do anything for him that may be done, and he happen to command me to kill a man, or any other like matter, ought I to refuse to do it?"

"You ought," answered Sir Federico, "to obey your lord in all things that tend to his profit and honor, not in such matters that tend to his loss and shame. Therefore if he should command you to conspire treason, you are not only not bound to do it, but you are bound not to do it, both for your own sake and for being a minister of the shame of your lord. Truth it is, many things seem at the first sight good which are ill, and many ill that notwithstanding are good. Therefore it is lawful for a man sometime in his lord's service to kill, not one man alone, but ten thousand, and to do many other things which if a man weigh them not as he ought, will appear ill, and yet are not so indeed."

Then answered the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino: "I beseech you let us hear you speak somewhat in this case, and teach us how we may discern things good indeed from such as appear good."

"I pray you pardon me," quoth Sir Federico, "I will not at this time enter into that, for there were too much to be said; but all is referred to your discretion."

"Clear you me at the least of another doubt," replied the Lord Gaspar.

"And what doubt is that?" questioned Sir Federico.

"This," answered the Lord Gaspar: "I would know where I am charged by my master in express words in an enterprise or business, whatever it be, what I have to do therein; if I, at the deed doing, think that doing more or less, or otherwise than my commission, to bring it more prosperously to pass and more for his profit that gave me that commission, whether ought I to govern myself according to the first charge, without passing the bounds of the commission, or else do the thing that I judge to be best?"

Then answered Sir Federico: "In this point I would give you the judgment with the example of Manlius Torquatus, which in that case for overmuch affection slew his son, if I thought him worthy great praise, which, to say the truth, I do not; although again I dare not discommend him, contrary to the opinion of so many hundred years. For, out of doubt, it is a dangerous matter to swerve from the commandments of a man's superiors, trusting more in his own judgment than in theirs, whom of reason he ought to obey; because if his imagination fail him and the matter take ill success, he runneth into the error of disobedience, and marreth that he hath to do, without any manner excuse or hope of pardon. Again, in case the matter come well to pass according to his desire, he must thank his fortune, and no more ado. Yet in this sort a custom is brought up to set little by the commandments of the superior powers. And by his example that bringeth the matter to good pass, which peradventure is a wise man and hath discoursed with reason, and also aided by fortune, afterward a thousand other ignorant persons and light-headed will take a stomach to aventure in matters of

most importance to do after their own way, and, to appear wise and of authority, will swerve from the commission of their heads, which is a very ill matter, and oftentimes the cause of infinite errors. But I believe in this point, the person whom the matter toucheth ought to scan it deeply, and, as it were, put in a balance the goodness and commodity that is like to ensue unto him in doing contrary to that he is charged, admitting his purpose succeed according to his hope, and counterpoise on the other side the hurt and discommodity that ariseth, if, in doing otherwise than he is commanded, the matter chance to have ill success; and knowing that the hurt may be greater and of more importance if it succeed ill, than the profit if it happen well, he ought to refrain and in every point to observe his commission. And contrarywise, if the profit be like to be of more importance, if it succeed well, than the hurt if it happen amiss, I believe he may with good reason take in hand to do the thing that reason and judgment shall set before him, and leave somewhat aside the very form of the commission, after the example of good merchantmen that to gain much adventure a little, and not much to gain a little. I allow well that he have a regard to the nature of the lord he serveth, and according to that frame himself. For in case he be rigorous, as many such there are, I would never counsel him, if he were my friend, to vary in any parcel from the appointed order, lest it happen unto him as a master engineer of Athens was served, unto whom Publius Crassus Mutianus, being in Asia and going about to batter a town, sent to demand of him one of the two shipmasts that he had seen in Athens to make a ram to beat down the walls, and said he would have the greater. This engineer, as

he that was very cunning indeed, knew the greater would not very well serve for this purpose, and because the lesser was more easy to be carried, and also fitter to make that ordnance, he sent that to Mutianus. After he had understood how the matter passed, he sent for the poor engineer and asked him why he obeyed him not, and, not admitting any reason he could allege for himself, made him to be stripped naked, beaten and whipped with rods, so that he died, seeming to him, instead of obeying him, he would have counseled him. Therefore with such vigorous men a man must look well to his doings.

"But let us leave apart now this practice of the superiors, and come down to the conversation that a man hath with his equals or somewhat inferiors; for unto them also must a man frame himself, because it is more universally frequented, and a man findeth himself oftener among them than among his superiors. Although there be some fond persons that, being in company with the greatest friend they have in the world, if they meet with one better appareled, by-and-by they cleave unto him; and if another come in place better than he, they do the like unto him. And again, when the prince passeth through the market-place, through churches, or other haunted places, they make all men give them room with their elbows till they come on their heels, and though they have nothing to say to him, yet will they talk with him and keep him with a long tale, laugh, clap the hands, and nod the head, to seem to have weighty business, that the people may see they are in favor. But because this kind of men vouchsafe not to speak but with great men, I will not we should vouchsafe to speak of them."

Then the Lord Giuliano: "Since you have," quoth he, "made mention of these that are so ready to fellowship themselves with the well appareled, I would have you to show us in what sort the Courtier should apparel himself, what kind of garment doth best become him, and how he should fit himself in all his garments; because we see infinite variety in it, and some are arrayed after the French fashion, some after the Spanish attire, another will seem a Dutchman. Neither want we of them also that will clothe themselves like Turks, some wear beards, other do not. Therefore it were a good deed, in this variety, to show how a man should choose out the best."

Sir Federico said: "In very deed I am not able to give any certain rule about raiment, but that a man should frame himself to the custom of the most. And since, as you say, this custom is so variable, and Italians are so desirous to take up other men's fashions, I believe every man may lawfully apparel himself at his pleasure. But I know not by what destiny it cometh that Italy hath not, as it was wont to have, a fashion of attire known to be the Italian fashion, for although the bringing up of these new fashions maketh the first to appear very gross, yet were they peradventure a token of liberty, where these have been a prognosticate of bondage, the which methink now is plainly enough fulfilled. And as it is written, when Darius, the year before he fought with Alexander, had altered his sword, which was a Persian blade, into the fashion of Macedonia, it was interpreted by the soothsayers, how this signified that they into whose fashion Darius had altered the form of his Persian blade should become rulers of Persia; even so where we have altered our Italian

fashions into strange, methink it signified that all they into whose fashions ours were changed should come in to overrun us; the which hath been too true, for there is not now a nation left that hath not made us their prey, so that there remaineth little behind to prey upon, and yet for all that cease not to prey still.

"But I will not enter into communication of sorrow; therefore it shall be well to speak of the raiment of our Courtier, the which, so it be not out of use, nor contrary to his profession, in the rest, I think, it will do well enough, so the wearer be satisfied withal. Truth it is, that I would love it the better if it were not extreme in any part, as the Frenchman is wont to be sometime over-long, and the Dutchman over-short, but as they are both the one and the other amended and brought into better frame by the Italians. Moreover, I will hold always with it if it be rather somewhat grave and ancient than garish. Therefore methink a black color hath a better grace in garments than any other, and though not thoroughly black, yet somewhat dark, and this I mean for his ordinary apparel. For there is no doubt but upon armor it is more meet to have sightly and merry colors, and also garments for pleasure cut pompous and rich. Likewise in open shows about triumphs, games, maskeries, and such other matters; because, so appointed, there is in them a certain liveliness and mirth, which indeed doth well set forth feats of arms and pastimes. But in the rest I could wish they should declare the solemnity that the Spanish nation much observeth, for outward matters many times are a token of the inward."

Then said the Lord Cesare Gonzaga: "I would not stick much at this, for, so a gentleman be of worthiness

in other matters, his garments neither increase nor minish reputation."

Sir Federico answered: "You say true. Yet which of us is there, that seeing a gentleman go with a garment upon his back quartered with sundry colors, or with so many points tied together, and all about with laces and fringes set overthwart, will not count him a very disard or a common jester?"

"Neither disard," quoth Messer Pietro Bembo, "nor jester would a man count him, that had lived any while in Lombardy, for there they all go so."

"Why, then," answered the Duchess, smiling, "if they go all so, it ought not to be objected to them for a vice, this kind of attire being as comely and proper to them as it is to the Venetians to wear their long, wide sleeves, and to the Florentines their hoods."

"I speak no more of Lombardy," quoth Sir Federico, "than of other places, for in every nation you shall find both foolish and wise. But to speak that I think is most requisite as touching apparel, I will have the Courtier in all his garments handsome and cleanly, and take a certain delight in modest preciseness, but not for all that after a womanish or light manner, neither more in one point than in another, as we see many so curious about their hair that they forget all the rest. Other delight to have their teeth fair. Other in their beard. Other in buskins. Other in caps. Other in coifs. And so it cometh to pass that those few things which they have cleanly in them, appear borrowed ware, and all the rest, which is most fond, is known to be their own. But this trade will I have our Courtier to flee by my counsel, with an addition also, that he ought to determine with himself what he will appear to be, and in such sort as

he desireth to be esteemed so to apparel himself, and make his garments help him to be counted such a one, even of them that hear him not speak, nor see him do any manner thing."

"I think it not meet," quoth then the Lord Pallavicino, "neither is it used among honest men, to judge men's conditions by their garments, and not by their words and deeds, for many a man might be deceived; and this proverb ariseth not without cause: 'The habit maketh not the monk.'"

"I say not," answered Sir Federico, "that men should give a resolute judgment by this alone, of men's conditions, and that they are not known by words and deeds more than by the garments. But I say that the garment is withal no small argument of the fancy of him that weareth it, although otherwhile it appear not true. And not this alone, but all the behaviors, gestures, and manners, beside words and deeds, are a judgment of the inclination of him in whom they are seen."

"And what things be those," answered the Lord Gaspar, "that you find we may give judgment upon, that are neither words nor deeds."

Then said Sir Federico: "You are too subtle a logician, but to tell you as I mean, some operations there are that remain after they are done, as building, writing, and such other; some remain not, as these that I mean now. Therefore do I not count, in this purpose, going, laughing, looking, and such matters to be operations, and notwithstanding outwardly do give many times a knowledge of that is within. Tell me, did you not give your judgment upon that friend of ours we communed of this morning past, to be a foolish and light person, as soon as you saw he wryed his head and bowed his

body, and invited with a cheerful countenance the company to put off their caps to him? So in like manner when you see one gaze earnestly with his eyes abashed, like one that had little wit; or that laugheth so fondly as do those dumb men, with the great wens in their throat, that dwell in the mountains of Bergamo; though he neither speak nor do any thing else, will you not count him a very fool? You may see that these behaviors, manners and gestures, which I mind not for this time to term operations, are a great matter to make men known. But methink there is another thing that giveth and diminisheth much reputation, namely the choice of friends with whom a man must have inward conversation. For undoubtedly reason willeth that such as are coupled in strict amity and inseparable company, should be also alike in will, in mind, in judgment, and inclination. So that he who so is conversant with the ignorant or wicked, he is also counted ignorant and wicked. And contrarywise he that is conversant with the good, wise, and discreet, he is reckoned such a one. For it seemeth by nature that everything doth willingly fellowship with his like. Therefore I believe that a man ought to have a respect in the beginning of these friendships, for of two near friends, who ever knoweth the one, by and by he imagineth the other to be of the same condition."

Then answered Messer Pietro Bembo: "To be bound in friendship with such agreement of mind as you speak of, methink indeed a man ought to have great respect, not only for getting or losing reputation, but because nowadays you find very few true friends. Neither do I believe that there are any more in the world those Pylades and Orestes, Theseus and Perithous, nor Scipio

and Lælius, but rather it happeneth daily, I wote not by what destiny, that two friends which many years have lived together with most hearty love, yet at the end beguile one another, in one manner or other, either for malice, or envy, or for lightness, or some other ill cause; and each one imputeth the fault to his fellow, of that which perhaps both the one and the other deserveth. Therefore because it hath happened to me more than once to be decived of him I loved best, and of whom I hoped I was beloved above any other person, I have thought with myself alone otherwhile to be well done, never to put a man's trust in any person in the world, nor to give himself so for a prey to friend how dear and loving soever he were, that without stop a man should make him partaker of all his thoughts, as he would his own self: because there are in our minds so many dens and corners that it is impossible for the wit of man to know the dissimulations that lie lurking in them. I believe therefore that it is well done to love and away with one more than another, according to the deserts and honesty, but not for all that so to assure a man's self, with this sweet bait of friendship, that afterward it should be too late for us to repent."

Then Sir Federico: "Truly," quoth he, "the loss should be much more than the gain, if that high degree of friendship should be taken from the fellowship of man which, in mine opinion, ministereth unto us all the goodness contained in our life; and therefore will I in no case consent to you that it is reasonable, but rather I can find in my heart to conclude, and that with most evident reasons, that without this perfect friendship, men were much more unlucky than all other living creatures. And albeit some wicked and profane taste

of this holy name of friendship, yet is it not for all that to be so rooted out of men's minds, and for the trespass of the ill, to deprive the good of so great a felicity. And I believe verily, for my part, there is here among us more than one couple of friends whose love is indissoluble and without any guile at all, and to endure until death, with agreement of will, no less than those men of old time whom you mentioned right now. And so it is always when, beside the inclination that cometh from above, a man chooseth him a friend like unto himself in conditions. And I mean the whole to consist among the good and virtuous men, because the friendship of the wicked is no friendship. I allow well that this knot, which is so strict, knit or bind no more than two, else were it in a hazard; for, as you know, three instruments of music are hardlier brought to agree together than two. I would have our Courtier therefore to find him out an especial and hearty friend, if it were possible, of that sort we have spoken of. Then, according to their deserts and honesty, love, honor, and observe all other men, and always do his best to fellowship himself with men of estimation that are noble and known to be good, more than with the unnoble and of small reputation, so he be also beloved and honored of them. And this shall come to pass if he be gentle, lowly, free-hearted, easy to be spoken to, and sweet in company, humble and diligent to serve, and to have an eye to his friend's profit and estimation, as well absent as present, bearing with their natural defaults that are to be borne withal, without breaking with them upon a small ground, and correcting in himself such as lovingly shall be told him, never preferring himself before other men in seeking the highest and chief rooms of estimation, neither

doing as some that a man would ween despised the world, and with a noisome sharpness will tell every man his duty, and beside that they are full of contention in every trifling matter and out of time, they control whatsoever they do not themselves, and always seek cause to complain of their friends, which is a most hateful thing."

Here, when Sir Federico had made a stay, the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino said: "I would have you to express somewhat more particularly this conversation with friends than you do, for indeed you keep yourself too much in the general, and touch unto us things, as it were, by the way."

"How by the way?" answered Sir Federico. "Would you have me to tell you also the very words that a man must use? Suppose you not then we have sufficiently communed of this?"

"I think yea," answered the Lord Gaspar. "Yet do I desire to understand also some particular point of the manner of entertainment among men and women, which, methink, is a very necessary matter, considering the most part of a man's time is spent therein in courts, and if it were always after one manner wise, a man would soon wax weary of it."

"Methink," answered Sir Federico, "we have given the Courtier a knowledge in so many things that he may well vary his conversation and frame himself according to the inclination of them he accompanieth himself withal, presupposing him to be of a good judgment, and therewithal to guide himself, and, according to the time, otherwhile have an eye to grave matters, and sometime to pastimes and games."

"And what games?" quoth the Lord Gaspar.

Sir Federico answered. "Let us ask Friar Seraphin."

"But in good earnest," replied the Lord Gaspar, "do you not think it a vice in the Courtier to play at dice and cards?"

"I think it none," quoth Sir Federico, "unless a man apply it too much, and by reason of that setteth aside other things more necessary, or else for none other intent but to get money, and to beguile his fellow, and in his loss fume and take on so that it might be thought a token of covetousness."

The Lord Gaspar answered: "And what say you to the game at chess?"

"It is truly an honest kind of entertainment, and witty," quoth Sir Federico. "But methink it hath a fault, which is, that a man may be too cunning at it, for whoever will be excellent in the play of chess, I believe he must bestow much time about it, and apply it with so much study that a man may as soon learn some noble science, or compass any other matter of importance, and yet in the end, in bestowing all that labor, he knoweth no more but a game. Therefore in this I believe there happeneth a very rare thing, namely, that the mean is more commendable than the excellency."

The Lord Gaspar answered: "There be many Spaniards excellent at it, and in many other games, which for all that bestow not much study upon it, nor yet lay aside the compassing of other matters."

"Believe not the contrary," answered Sir Federico, "but they bestow much study upon it, although feigningly. As for those other games you speak of, beside chess, peradventure they are like many which I have seen that serve to small purpose, but only to make the common people wonder. Therefore, in mine opinion, they deserve none other praise or reward than the great

Alexander gave unto him that, standing afar off, did so well broach chick-peas upon a needle. But because fortune, as in many other things, so in the opinion of men seemeth to bear a great stroke, it is sometime seen that a gentleman, how well conditioned ever he be, and endowed with many qualities, shall be little set of by a great man, and, as they say, groweth not in favor with him, and without any cause why, that a man may discern. Therefore when he cometh into his presence without any acquaintance beforehand, with the rest about him, though he be witty and ready in his answers, and showeth himself handsomely well in his behaviors, in his conditions and words, and in whatever belongeth unto him, yet will that lord set light by him, and rather give him an ill countenance than esteem him; and of this will arise that the rest immediately will frame themselves to their lord's mind, and it shall seem unto every man that he is little worth, neither will any man regard him or make of him, or laugh at his pleasant sayings, or set anything by him, but will begin all to serve him sluttish pranks, and make him a cozzen; neither shall good answers suffice the poor soul, nor yet the taking of things as spoken in jest, for even the very pages will be at him, so that were he the fairest conditioned man in the world, he can not choose but be thus baited and jested at. And contrarywise, if a prince be inclined to one that is most ignorant, that can neither do nor say anything, his manners and behaviors, be they never so fond and foolish, are many times commended with acclamation and wonder of all men, and it seemeth that all the court beholdeth and observeth him, and every man laugheth at his boorishness and certain carterlike jests, that should rather move a man

to vomit than to laugh; so addicted and stiff men be in the opinions that arise of the favors and disfavors of great men. Therefore will I have our Courtier the best he can, beside his worthiness, to help himself with wit and art, and whenever he hath to go where he is strange and not known, let him procure there go first a good opinion of him, before he come in person, and so work that they may understand there how he is in other places with lords, ladies and gentlemen in good estimation; because that fame, which seemeth to arise of the judgments of many, engendereth a certain assured confidence of a man's worthiness, which afterward, finding men's minds so settled and prepared, is easily with deeds maintained and increased, beside that a man is eased of the trouble that I feel when I am asked the question, who am I and what is my name."

"I can not see what this can help," answered Messer Bernardo Bibbiena, "for it hath sundry times happened unto me, and I believe to many more, after I had grounded in my mind by report of many men of judgment a matter to be of great perfection before I had seen it, when I had once seen it it feinted much, and I was much deceived in mine imagination, and this proceedeth of nothing else but of giving too much credit to fame and report, and of conceiving in my mind so great an opinion that, measuring it afterward with the truth, the effect, though it were great and excellent, yet in comparison of that I had imagined of it, seemed very slender unto me. Even so, I fear me, may also come to pass of the Courtier. Therefore I can not see how it were well done to give these expectations, and to send that fame of a man before; because our minds many times fashion and shape things which is impos-

sible afterward to answer to and fulfil, and so doth a man lose more than he gaineth by it."

Here Sir Federico said: "Things that unto you and many more are less in effect than the fame is of them, are for the most part of that sort that the eye at the first sight may give a judgment of them. As, if you have never been at Naples or at Rome, when you hear men commune of it, you imagine much more of it than perhaps you find afterward in sight. But in the conditions of men it is not alike, because that you see outwardly is the least part. Therefore in case, the first day you hear a gentleman talk, you perceive not the worthiness in him that you had before imagined, you do not so soon lose the good opinion of him as you do in the things wherein your eye is by-and-by a judge. But you will look from day to day to have him disclose some other hid virtue, keeping notwithstanding always that steadfast imprinting which you have, risen by the words of so many. And this man then being (as I set case our Courtier is) of so good qualities, he will every hour strengthen you more and more, to give credence to that fame, for that with his doings he shall give you a cause, and you will ever surmise somewhat more to be in him than you see. And certainly it can not be denied but these first imprintings have a very great force, and a man ought to take much heed to them.

"And that you may understand of what weight they be, I say unto you, that I have known in my days a gentleman who, albeit he was of sufficiently mannerly behavior and modest conditions, and well seen in arms, yet was he not in any of these qualities so excellent but there were many as good and better. Notwithstanding, as luck served him, it befell that a gentlewoman entered

most fervently in love with him, and this love daily increasing through declaration that the young man made to agree with her in that behalf, and perceiving no manner mean how they might come to speak together, the gentlewoman, provoked with too great passion, opened her desire to another gentlewoman, by whose mean she hoped upon some commodity. This woman neither in blood nor in beauty was a whit inferior to the first. Upon this it came to pass that she, perceiving her talk so effectually of this young man, whom she never saw, and knowing how that gentlewoman, whom she wist well was most discreet and of a very good judgment, loved him extremely, imagined forthwith that he was the fairest, the wisest, the discreetest, and finally the worthiest man to be beloved that was in the world; and so, without seeing him, fell so deep in love with him that she practised what she could to come by him, not for her friend, but for her own self, and to make him answerable to her in love, the which she brought to pass without any great ado, for, to say the truth, she was a woman rather to be sought upon than to seek upon others. Now hear a pretty chance. It happened no long time after, that a letter which this last gentlewoman writ unto her lover came to the hands of another that was a noble woman of excellent qualities and singular beauty, who being, as the most part of women are, inquisitive and greedy to understand secrets and especially of other women, opened the letter, and in reading it perceived it was written with an extreme affection of love. And the sweet words full of fire that she read, first moved her to take compassion on that gentlewoman, for she knew very well from whom the letter came and to whom it went. Afterward they had such force that, scanning them in

her mind, and considering what manner a man this was like to be, that could bring that woman into such love, by-and-by she fell in love with him, and that letter was more effectual to work in this case than peradventure it would have been if it had been sent her from the young man himself. And, as it chanceth sometime, poison prepared in a dish of meat for some great man killeth him that tasteth first of it, so this poor gentlewoman, because she was too greedy, drank of the amorous poison that was ordained for another. What shall I say unto you? The matter was very open and spread so abroad that many women beside these, partly in despite of the other, and partly to do as the other did, bent all their study and diligence to enjoy his love, and for a season played as children do at chopchirie; and the whole proceeded of the first opinion which that woman conceived that heard him so praised of another."

Now the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino answered here smiling: "You, to confirm your judgment with reason, allege unto me women's doings, which for the most part are void of all reason. And in case you would tell all, this good fellow thus favored of so many women was some dolt, and a man indeed not to be regarded, because the manner of them is always to cleave to the worst, and like sheep to do that they see the first do, be it well or ill. Beside that, they be so spiteful among themselves, that if he had been a monstrous creature they would surely have stolen him one from another."

Here many began, and in manner all, to speak against the Lord Gaspar, but the Duchess made them all to hold their peace. Afterward she said smiling: "If the ill which you speak of women were not so far wide from the truth that, in speaking it, it hurteth and shameth

rather the speaker than them, I would suffer you to be answered. But I will not have you, in speaking against you with a number of reasons, forsake this your ill custom, because you may be sharply punished for this offense of yours, which shall be with the ill opinion that all they will conceive of you that hear you talk in this wise."

Then answered Sir Federico: "Say not, my Lord Gaspar, that women are so void of reason, though sometime they apply themselves to love, more through the judgment of others than their own, for great men and many wise men do oftentimes the like. And if it be lawful to tell the truth, you yourself and all we here have many times, and do at this present, credit the opinion of others more than our own. And that it is true, not long ago there were certain verses showed here, that bore the name of Sanazarus, and were thought of everybody very excellent, and praised out of reason. Afterward when they were certainly known to be another man's doing, they lost by-and-by their reputation, and seemed worse than mean. And where there was sung in the Duchess's presence here a certain anthem, it never delighted nor was reckoned good, until it was known to be the doing of Josquin de Pris. But what token will you have more plainer of opinion? Do you not remember where you yourself drank of one self wine, sometime you said it was most perfect, and another time without all taste?—and that because you had been persuaded they were two sorts, the one of the coast of Genoa, and the other of this soil. And when the error was opened, by no means you would believe it, that false opinion was grounded so stiffly in your head, which arose notwithstanding of other men's words.

Therefore ought the Courtier diligently to apply in the beginning to give a good imprinting of himself, and consider what a harmful and deadly thing it is to run in the contrary. And in this danger more than other men do they stand that will make profession to be very pleasant and with this their merry fashion purchase them a certain liberty, that lawfully they may say and do what cometh in their mind without thinking upon it. For such men many times enter into certain matters, which when they can not get out again, will afterward help themselves with raising laughter, and it is done with so ill grace that it will in no wise frame, whereby they bring a very great loathsomeness upon as many as see or hear them, and they remain very cold and without any grace or countenance. Some time thinking thereby to be subtle witted and full of jests, in the presence of honorable women, yea, and oftentimes to them themselves, they thrust out filthy and most dishonest words; and the more they see them blush at it, the better Courtiers they reckon themselves, and still they laugh at it, and rejoice among themselves at this goodly virtue they think they have gotten them. But they practise this beastliness for none other cause but to be counted good fellows. This is the name alone which they deem worthy praise, and which they brag more of than of anything else, and to get it them, they speak the foulest and shamefullest villainies in the world. Many times they shoulder one another down the stairs, and hurl billets and bricks, one at another's head. They hurl handfuls of dust in men's eyes. They cast horse and man into ditches, or down on the side of some hill. Then at table, pottage, sauce, jellies, and whatever cometh to hand, into the face it goeth; and afterward laugh. And whoso can do

most of these tricks, he counteth himself the best and gallantest Courtier, and supposeth that he hath won great glory. And in case otherwhile they get a gentleman in these their pleasant pastimes, that will not give himself to such horseplay, they say by-and-by: 'He is too wise, we will have him a counselor, he is no good fellow.' But I will tell you a worse matter. Some there be that contend and lay wager who can eat and drink more unsavory and stinking things, and so abhorring and contrary to man's senses that it is not possible to name them without very great loathsomeness."

"And what things be those?" quoth the Lord Lodovico Pio.

Sir Federico answered: "Let the Marquess Febus tell you, for he hath often seen it in France, and peradventure felt it."

The Marquess Febus answered: "I have seen none of these things done in France more than in Italy. But look what good things the Italians have in their garments, in feasting, in banqueting, in feats of arms and in every other thing that belongeth to a Courtier; they have it all of the Frenchmen."

"I deny not," answered Sir Federico, "but there are also among the Frenchmen very honest and sober gentlemen, and for my part I have known many, without peradventure, worthy all praise. But yet some there are of little good manner; and to speak generally, methink, the Spaniards agree more with Italians in conditions than Frenchmen, because, in my mind, the peculiar quiet gravity of the Spaniards is more agreeable to our nature than the quick liveliness that is perceived in the French nation almost in every gesture; which is not to be discommended in them, but is rather a grace,

for it is so natural and proper to them that there is no manner affecting or curiosity in it. There are many Italians that would fain counterfeit their fashion, and can do naught else but shake the head in speaking, and make a leg with an ill grace, and when they come out of their doors into the city, go so fast that good footmen can scant overtake them, and with these manners they ween themselves good Frenchmen, and to have of that liberty; which, you wist, chanceth very seldom saving to such as are brought up in France and have learned that fashion from their childhood. The like is to be said in the knowledge of sundry tongues, which I commend much in our Courtier, and especially Spanish and French, because the intercourse of both the one nation and the other is much haunted in Italy, and these two are more agreeable unto us than any of the rest, and those two princes, for that they are very mighty in war and most rival in peace, have their courts always furnished with valiant gentlemen, which are dispersed throughout the world, and again we must needs practise with them. I will not now proceed to speak any more particularly of matters too well known, as that our Courtier ought not to profess to be a glutton nor a drunkard, nor riotous nor inordinate in any ill condition, nor filthy and uncleanly in his living, with certain rude and boisterous behaviors that smell of the plow and cart a thousand mile off; for he that is of that sort, it is not only not to be hoped that he will make a good Courtier, but he can be set to no better use than to keep sheep.

"And to conclude, I say that, to do well, the Courtier ought to have a perfect understanding in that we have said is meet for him, so that every possible thing may

be easy to him, and all men wonder at him, and he at no man; meaning notwithstanding in this point that there be not a certain lofty and unmannerly stubbornness, as some men have that show themselves not to wonder at the things which other men do, because they take upon them that they can do them much better, and with their silence do commend them as unworthy to be spoken of, and will make gesture, in a manner as though none beside were, I will not say their equal, but able to conceive the understanding of the profoundness of their cunning. Therefore ought the Courtier to shun these hateful manners, and with gentleness and courtesy praise other men's good deeds; and though he perceive himself excellent and far above others, yet show that he esteemeth not himself such a one. But because these so full perfections are very seldom found in the nature of man, and perhaps never, yet ought not a man that perceiveth himself in some part to want, to lay aside his hope to come to a good pass, though he can not reach to that perfect and high excellency which he aspireth unto; because in every art there may be many other places beside the best, all praiseworthy; and he that striveth to come by the highest, it is seldom seen that he passeth not the mean. I will have our Courtier, therefore, if he find himself excellent in anything beside arms, to set out himself, and get him estimation by it after an honest sort, and be so discreet and of so good a judgment, that he may have the understanding after a comely manner, and with good purpose to allure men to hear or to look on that he supposeth himself to be excellent in; making semblant always to do it, not for a brag and to show it for vainglory, but at a chance, and rather prayed by others than coming of his own

free will. And in everything that he hath to do or to speak, if it be possible, let him come always provided and think on it beforehand, showing, notwithstanding, the whole to be done *ex tempore* and at the first sight. As for the things he hath but a mean skill in, let him touch them, as it were, by the way, without grounding much upon them, yet in such wise that a man may believe he hath a great deal more cunning therein than he uttereth; as certain poets sometime that harped upon very subtle points of philosophy, or other sciences, and peradventure had small understanding in the matter. And in that he knoweth himself altogether ignorant in, I will never have him make any profession at all, nor seek to purchase him any fame by it, but rather, when occasion serveth, confess to have no understanding in it."

"This," quoth Calmeta, "would Nicoletto never have done, which being a very excellent philosopher, and no more skilful in the law than in fleeing, when a Governor of Padua was minded to give him one of those lectures in the law, he would never yield at the persuasion of many scholars, to deceive the opinion which the Governor had conceived of him, and confess that he had no understanding in it, but said still that he was not in this point of Socrates' opinion, for it is not a philosopher's part to say at any time that he hath no understanding."

"I say not," answered Sir Federico, "that the Courtier should of himself go say he hath no understanding, without it be required of him; for I allow not this fondness to accuse and debase himself. Again I remember some otherwhile that in like sort do willingly disclose some matters, which although they happened perhaps without any fault of theirs, yet bring they with them a

shadow of slander, as did a gentleman, whom you all know, which always when he heard any mention made of the battle beside Parma against King Charles, he would by-and-by declare how he fled away, and a man would ween that he saw or understood nothing else in that journey. Afterward, talking of a certain famous joust, he rehearsed continually how he was overthrown; and many times also he seemed in his talk to seek how he might bring into purpose to declare that upon a night, as he was going to speak with a gentlewoman, he was well beaten with a cudgel. Such trifling follies I will not have our Courtier speak of. But methink when occasion is offered to show his skill in a matter he is altogether ignorant in, it is well done to avoid it. If necessity compel him, let him rather confess plainly his lack of understanding in it than hazard himself, and so shall he avoid a blame that many deserve nowadays, which, I wot not through what corrupt inward motion or judgment out of reason, do always take upon them to practise the thing they know not, and lay aside that they are skilful in; and for a confirmation of this, I know a very excellent musician, which, leaving his music apart, hath wholly given himself to versifying, and thinketh himself a great clerk therein, but in deed he maketh every man to laugh him to scorn, and now hath he also clean lost his music. Another, one of the chief painters in the world, neglecting his art, wherein he was very excellent, hath applied himself to learn philosophy, wherein he hath such strange conceits and monstrous fancies, that with all the painting he hath he can not paint them. And such as these there be infinite. Some there be that, knowing themselves to have an excellency in one thing, make their principal profession in another, in which nothwithstand-

ing they are not ignorant, but when time serveth to show themselves in that they are most skilful in, they do it always very perfectly; and otherwhile it cometh so to pass that the company perceiving them so cunning in that which is not their profession, they imagine them to be much better in that they profess indeed. This art, in case it be coupled with a good judgment, discontenteth me nothing at all."

Then answered the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino: "I think not this an art, but a very deceit, and I believe it is not meet for him that will be an honest man to deceive at any time."

"This," quoth Sir Federico, "is rather an ornament that accompanieth the thing he doeth, than a deceit; and though it be a deceit, yet is it not to be disallowed. Will you not say also, that he that beateth his fellow, where there be two that playeth at fence together, beguileth him, and that is because he hath more art than the other? And where you have a jewel that unset seemeth fair, afterward when it cometh to a goldsmith's hands that in well setting it maketh it appear much more fairer, will you not say that the goldsmith deceiveth the eyes of them that look on it? And yet for that deceit deserveth he praise, for with judgment and art a cunning hand doth many times add a grace and ornament to ivory, or to silver, or to a stone that is fair in sight, setting it in gold. We say not, then, that this art or deceit, in case you will so term it, deserveth any manner blame. Also it is not ill for a man that knoweth himself skilful in a matter, to seek occasion after a comely sort to show his fear therein, and in like case to cover the parts he thinketh scant worthy praise, yet notwithstanding all after a certain wary dissimulation. Do you not remember how

King Ferdinand, without making any show to seek it, took occasion very well to strip himself sometime into his doublet? and that because he knew he was very well made and nimble withal. And because his hands were not all of the fairest, he seldom plucked off his gloves, and, in manner, never. And few there were that took heed to this wariness of his. Methink also I have read that Julius Cæsar wore for the nones a garland of laurel, to hide his baldness withal. But in these matters a man must be very circumspect and of a good judgment, lest he pass his bounds; for to avoid one error oftentimes a man falleth into another, and to get him praise purchaseth blame.

"Therefore the surest way in the world is, for a man in his living and conversation to govern himself always with a certain honest mean, which, no doubt, is a great and most sure shield against envy, the which a man ought to avoid in what he is able. I will have our Courtier also take heed he purchase not the name of a liar, nor of a vain person, which happeneth many times and to them also that deserve it not. Therefore in his communication let him be always heedful not to go out of the likelihood of truth, yea and not to speak too often those truths that have the face of a lie, as many do that never speak but of wonders, and will be of such authority that every incredible matter must be believed at their mouth. Other, at the first entering into a friendship with a new friend, to get favor with him, the first thing they speak, swear that there is not a person in the world whom they love better, and they are willing to jeopard their life for his sake, and such other matters out of reason, and when they part from him make wise to weep, and not to speak a word for sorrow.

Thus because they would be counted too loving worms they make men count them liars and fond flatterers. But it were too long a matter and tedious to reckon up all vices that may happen in conversation. Therefore, for that I desire in the Courtier, it sufficeth to say, beside the matters rehearsed, that he be such a one that shall never want good communication and fit for them he talketh withal, and have a good understanding with a certain sweetness to refresh the hearers' minds, and with merry conceits and jests to provoke them to solace and laughter, so that, without being at any time loathsome or satiate, he may evermore delight them. Now I hope my Lady Emilia will give me leave to hold my peace, which, in case she deny me, I shall by mine own words be convicted not to be the good Courtier I have told you of, for not only good communication, which neither at this time nor perhaps at any other you have heard in me, but also this I have, such as it is, doth clean fail me."

Then spake the Lord General: "I will not have this false opinion to stick in the head of any of us, that you are not a very good Courtier, for, to say the truth, this desire of yours to hold your peace proceedeth rather because you would be rid of your pain than for that you want talk. Therefore, that it may not appear in so noble assembly as this is, and in so excellent talk, any parcel be left out, say you not nay to teach us how we should use these jests you have made mention of, and show us the art that belongeth to all this kind of pleasant speech to provoke laughter and solace after an honest sort; for, in mine opinion, it is very necessary and much to purpose for a Courtier."

"My Lord," answered Sir Federico, "jests and merry

conceits are rather a gift and a grace of nature, than of art; but yet there are some nations more readier in it than other some, as the Tuscans, which indeed are very subtle. Also it appeareth proper to the Spaniards to invent merry conceits. Yet are there many notwithstanding both of this nation and other also that in too much babbling pass sometime their bounds and wax unsavory and fond, because they have no respect to the condition of the person they commune withal, to the place where they may be, to the time, to the gravity and modesty which they ought to have in themselves."

Then answered the Lord General: "You deny that there is any art in jests, and yet in speaking against such as observe them not with modesty and gravity and have not respect to the time and to the person they commune withal, methink you declare that this may also be taught and hath some doctrine in it."

"These rules, my Lord," answered Sir Federico, "be so general that they may be applied to every matter, and help it forward; but I have said there is no art in jests, because, methink, they are only of two sorts: whereof the one is enlarged in communication that is long and without interruption, as is seen in some men that with so good an utterance and grace and so pleasantly declare and express a matter that happened unto them, or that they have seen and heard, that with their gesture and words they set it before a man's eyes, and, in manner, make him feel it with hand; and this peradventure, for want of another term, we may call Festivity or else Civility. The other sort of jests is very brief, and consisteth only in quick and subtle sayings, as many times there are heard among us, and in nicks, neither doth it appear that they are of any grace without that

little biting, and these among them of old time were also called Sayings, now some term them Privy taunts. I say therefore in the first kind, which is a merry manner of expressing, there needeth no art, because very Nature herself createth and shapeth men apt to express pleasantly and giveth them a countenance, gestures, a voice, and words for the purpose to counterfeit what they lust. In the other of privy taunts what can art do? Since that quip ought to be shot out and hit the prick before a man can discern that he that speaketh it can think upon it, else it is cold and little worth. Therefore, think I all is the work of wit and nature."

Then took Messer Pietro Bembo the matter in hand and said: "The Lord General denieth not that you say, namely, that nature and wit bear not the chiefest stroke, especially as touching invention; but it is certain that in each man's mind, of how good a wit soever he be, there arise conceits both good and bad, and more and less, but then judgment and art doth polish and correct them, and chooseth the good and refuseth the bad. Therefore, laying aside that belongeth to wit, declare you unto us that consisteth in art; that is, to wit, of jests and merry conceits that move laughter, which are meet for the Courtier and which are not, and in what time and manner they ought to be used: for this is that the Lord General demandeth of you."

Then Sir Federico said smiling: "There is never a one of us here that I will not give place unto in every matter, and especially in jesting, unless perhaps follies, which make men laugh many times more than witty sayings, were also to be allowed for jests."

And so turning him to Count Lodovico, and to Messer Bernardo Bibbiena, he said unto them: These be the

masters of this faculty, of whom, in case I must speak of merry sayings, I must first learn what I have to say."

Count Lodovico answered: "Methink you begin now to practise that you say you are not skilful in, which is, to make these lords laugh in mocking Messer Bernardo and me, because every one of them wotteth well that the thing which you praise us for is much more perfectly in you. Therefore, in case you be weary, it is better for you to sue to the Duchess that it would please her to defer the remnant of our talk till to-morrow, than to go about with craft to rid your hands of painstaking."

Sir Federico began to make answer, but the Lady Emilia interrupted him immediately and said: "It is not the order that the disputation should be consumed upon your praise, it sufficeth you are very well known all. But because it cometh in my mind that you, Count, imputed to me yesternight that I divided not the painstaking equally, it shall be well done that Sir Federico rest him a while, and the charge of speaking of jests we will commit to Messer Bernardo Bibbiena; for we do not only know him very quick witted in talking without intermission, but also it is not out of our memory that he hath sundry times promised to write of this matter. And therefore we may think he hath very well thought upon it all this while, and ought the better to satisfy us in it. Afterward when there shall be sufficiently spoken of jests, Sir Federico shall proceed forward again with that he hath yet behind concerning the Courtier."

Then said Sir Federico: "Madam, I know not what I have left behind any more, but like a traveler on the way now weary of the painfulness of my long journey at noontide, I will rest me in Messer Bernardo's com-

munication at the sound of his words, as it were under some fair tree that casteth a goodly shadow at the sweet roaring of a plentiful and lively spring; afterward, mayhap, being somewhat refreshed, I may have somewhat else to say."

Messer Bernardo answered laughing: "If I show you the top, you shall see what shadow may be hoped for at the leaves of my tree. To hear the roaring of the lively spring you speak of, it may happen be your chance so to do, for I was once turned into a spring—not by any of the gods of old time, but by our Friar Marian. And from that time hitherto I never wanted water."

Then began they all to fall in a-laughing, because this pleasant matter which Messer Bernardo meant that happened to him in Rome in the presence of Galeotto, Cardinal of San Pietro in Vincula, was well known to them.

After they had ceased laughing the Lady Emilia said: "Leave now making us laugh with practising of jests, and teach us how we should use them and whence they are derived, and whatever else you know in this matter. And for losing any more time begin out of hand."

"I doubt me," quoth Messer Bernardo, "it is late, and lest my talk of pleasant matters should seem unpleasant and tedious, perhaps it were good to defer it till tomorrow."

Here incontinently many made answer that it lacked yet a good deal of the hour when they were wont to leave off reasoning.

Then Messer Bernardo, turning to the Duchess and to the Lady Emilia: "I will not refuse this labor," quoth he, "although I be wont to marvel at the boldness of them that dare take upon them to sing to the lute, when our Jacopo Sansecondo standeth by, even so ought not

I, in the presence of hearers that have much better understanding in that I have to say, than I myself, take upon me to entreat of jests. Nevertheless, lest I should show a precedent to any of these lords to refuse that they shall be charged withal, I will speak as briefly as I can possible what cometh in my mind as touching matters that cause laughter, which is so proper to us that to describe a man the common saying is, 'He is a living creature that can laugh;' because this laughing is perceived only in man, and, in manner, always is a token of a certain jocundness and merry mood that he feeleth inwardly in his mind, which by nature is drawn to pleasantness and coveteth quietness and refreshing, for which cause we see men have invented many matters, as sports, games and pastimes, and so many sundry sorts of open shows. And because we bear good will to such as are the occasion of this recreation of ours, the manner was among the kings of old time, among the Romans, the Athenians, and many other, to get the good will of the people withal, and to feed the eyes and minds of the multitude, to make great theaters, and other public buildings, and there to show new devices of pastimes, running of horses and chariots, fightings of men together, strange beasts, comedies, tragedies, and dances of antique. Neither did the grave philosophers shun these sights, for many times, both in this manner and at banquets, they refreshed their wearisome minds in those high discourses and divine imaginations of theirs. The which in likewise all sorts of men are willing to do; for not only ploughmen, mariners, and all such as are inured with hard and boisterous exercises with hand, but also holy religious men and prisoners that from hour to hour wait for death, go about yet to seek some rem-

edy and medicine to refresh themselves. Whatsoever therefore causeth laughter, the same maketh the mind jocund and giveth pleasure, nor suffereth a man in that instant to mind the troublesome griefs that our life is full of. Therefore, as you see, laughing is very acceptable to all men, and he is much to be commended that can cause it in due time and after a comely sort. But what this laughing is, and where it consisteth, and in what manner sometimes it taketh the veins, the eyes, the mouth and the sides, and seemeth as though it would make us burst, so that whatever resistance we make, it is not possible to keep it, I will leave it to be disputed of Democritus, the which also, in case he would promise us, he should not perform it.

"The place, therefore, and, as it were, the headspring that laughing matters arise of, consisteth in a certain deformity or ill-favoredness, because a man laugheth only at those matters that are disagreeing in themselves, and, to a man's seeming, are in ill plight, where it is not so indeed. I wot not otherwise how to expound it; but if you will bethink yourself, you shall perceive the thing that a man always laugheth at is a matter that soundeth not well, and yet is it not in ill setting. What kind of ways, therefore, those be that the Courtier ought to use in causing laughter, and of what scope, I will assay in what I can to utter unto you as far as my judgment can give me; because to make men laugh always is not comely for the Courtier, nor yet in such wise as frantic, drunken, foolish and fond men, and in like manner common jesters do. And though, to a man's thinking, courts cannot be without that kind of persons, yet deserve they not the name of a Courtier, but each man to be called by his name and esteemed such as they

are. The scope and measure to make men laugh in taunting must also be diligently considered: who he is that is taunted, for it provoketh no laughter to mock and scorn a silly soul in misery and calamity, nor yet a naughty knave and common ribald, because a man would think that these men deserved to be otherwise punished than in jesting at. And men's minds are not bent to scoff them in misery, unless such men in their mishap brag and boast of themselves and have a proud and haughty stomach. Again, a respect must be had to them that are generally favored and beloved of every man, and that bear stroke, because in mocking and scorning such a one, a man may sometime purchase himself dangerous enmity. Therefore it is not amiss to scoff and mock at vices that are in persons not of such misery that it should move compassion, nor of such wickedness that a man would think they deserved not to go on the ground, nor of such authority that any little displeasure of theirs may be a great hindrance to a man. You shall understand, moreover, that out of the places jesting matters are derived from, a man may in like manner pick grave sentences to praise or dispraise. And otherwhile with the selfsame words: as to praise a liberal man that partaketh his goods in common with his friends, the common saying is, 'That he hath is none of his own,' and the like may be said in dispraise of one that hath stolen or compassed that he hath by other ill means. It is also a common saying, 'She is a woman of no small price,' when a man will praise her for her virtues, for her wisdom and goodness, and the very same may be said of a woman that looketh to be kept sumptuously. But it cometh oftener to purpose that a man in this case serveth his turn with the selfsame places

than with the selfsame words. As within these few days three gentlemen standing at mass together in a church where was a gentlewoman one of the three was in love withal, there came a poor beggar and stood before her requiring her alms, and so with much instance and lamenting with a groaning voice repeated many times his request; yet for all that did she not give him her alms, nor deny it him in making sign to depart in God's name, but stood musing with herself as though she minded other matter. Then said the gentleman that loved her to his two companions, 'See what I may hope for at my mistress's hands, which is so cruel that she will neither give the poor naked soul dead for hunger, that requireth her with such passion and so instantly, her alms, nor yet leave to depart, so much she rejoiceth to behold with her eyes one that is brought low with misery and that in vain requireth her reward.' One of the two answered: 'It is no cruelty, but a privy admonition for you to do you, to wit, that your mistress is not pleased with him that requireth her with much instance.' The other answered: 'Nay, it is rather a lesson for him, that although she give not that is required of her, yet she is willing enough to be sued to.' See here, because the gentlewoman sent not the poor man away, there arose one saying of great dispraise, one of modest praise, and another of nipping boord. To return, therefore, to declare the kinds of jests appertaining to our purpose, I say, in mine opinion there are of three sorts, although Sir Federico hath made mention but of two. The one a civil and pleasant declaration without interruption, which consisteth in the effect of a thing. The other a quick and subtle readiness, which consisteth in one saying alone. Therefore will we add a third sort

to these, which we call practical jokes or merry pranks, wherein the process is long and the sayings short and some deeds withal. The first, therefore, that consisteth in communication without interruption are in that sort, in a manner, as though a man would tell a tale.

"We shall see now how this kind of jests is proper and good, and how fitting it is for one in court, whether it be true or false a man saith, for in this case it is lawful to feign what a man lusteth without blame, and in speaking the truth, to set it forth with a feat lie, augmenting or diminishing according to the purpose. But the perfect grace and very pith of this is, to set forth so well and without pain, not only in words but in gestures, the thing a man purposeth to express, that unto the hearers he may appear to do before their eyes the things he speaketh of. And this expressed manner in this wise hath such force that otherwhile it setteth forth and maketh a matter delight very much which of itself is not very merry nor witty. And although these protestations need gestures and the earnestness that a lively voice hath, yet is the force of them known also otherwhile in writing. Who laugheth not when Giovanni Boccaccio, in the eighth journey of his hundred tales, declareth how the priest of Varlungo strained himself to sing a *Kyrie* and a *Sanctus,* when he perceived Belcolore was in the church? These be also pleasant declarations in his tales of Calandrino and many other. After the same sort seemeth to be the making a man laugh in counterfeiting or imitating, however we list to term it, of a man's manners, wherein hitherto I have seen none pass our Messer Roberto of Bari."

"This were no small praise," quoth Messer Roberto, "if it were true; for then would I surely go about to

counterfeit rather the good than the bad; and if I could liken myself to some I know, I would think myself a happy man. But I fear me I can counterfeit nothing but what maketh a man laugh, which you said before consisteth in vice."

Messer Bernardo answered: "In vice, indeed, but that that standeth not in ill plight. And weet you well that this counterfeiting we speak of cannot be without wit; for beside the manner to apply his words and his gestures, and to set before the hearers' eyes the countenance and manners of him he speaketh of, he must be wise and have great respect to the place, to the time, and to the persons with whom he talketh, and not like a common jester pass his bounds; which things you wonderfully well observe, and therefore I believe you are skilful in all. For undoubtedly it is not meet for a gentleman to make weeping and laughing faces, to make sounds and voices, and to wrestle with himself alone, as Berto doth, to apparel himself like a lob of the country as doth Strascino, and such other matters, which do well become them because it is their profession. But we must by the way and privily steal this counterfeiting, always keeping the estate of a gentleman, without speaking filthy words, or doing uncomely deeds, without making faces and antics, but frame our gestures after a certain manner, that whoso heareth and seeeth us, may by our words and countenances imagine much more than he seeeth and heareth, and upon that take occasion to laugh. He must also in this counterfeiting take heed of too much taunting in touching a man, especially in the illfavoredness of visage or ill shape of body. For as the mishaps and vices of the body minister many times ample matter to laugh at, if a man can

discreetly handle it, even so the using of this manner too bitingly is a token not only of a common jester but of a plain enemy. Therefore must a man observe in this point, though it be hard, the fashion of our Messer Roberto, as I have said, which counterfeiteth all men and not without touching them in the matters wherein they be faulty and in presence of themselves, and yet no man findeth himself aggrieved, neither may a man think that he can take it in ill part. And of this I will give you no example, because we all see infinite in him daily. Also it provoketh much laughter, which nevertheless is contained under declaration, when a man repeateth with a good grace certain defaults of other men, so they be mean and not worthy greater correction; as foolish matters sometime simply of themselves alone, sometime annexed with a little ready nipping fondness. Likewise certain extreme and curious matters. Otherwhile a great and well forged lie. As few days ago our Messer Cesare declared a pretty foolish matter, which was, that being with the Mayor of this city, he saw a countryman come to him to complain that he had an ass stolen from him, and after he had told him of his poverty and how the thief deceived him, to make his loss the greater he said unto him: 'Sir, if you had seen mine ass you should have known what a cause I have to complain, for with his pad on his back a man would have thought him very Tully himself. And one of our train meeting a herd of goats before the which was a mighty great ram goat, he stayed and with a marvelous countenance, said: "Mark me this goat, he seemeth a Saint Paul."'"

The Lord Gaspar said he knew another, which for that he was an old servant to Hercules, Duke of Ferrara, did

offer him two pretty boys which he had, to be his pages, and these two died both before they came to his service. The which when the Duke understood, he lamented lovingly with the father, saying that he was very sorry, because when he saw them upon a time he thought them handsome and witty children. The father made answer: 'Nay, my Lord, you saw nothing, for within these few days they were become much more handsomer and of better qualities than I would have ever have thought, and sang together like a couple of hawks.' And one of these days a doctor of ours, beholding one that was judged to be whipped about the market-place, and taking pity upon him because the poor soul's shoulders bled sore, and went so soft a pace, as though he had walked about for his pleasure to pass the time withal, he said to him: 'Go on a pace, poor fellow, that thou mayest be the sooner out of thy pain.' Then he turning about and beholding him that so said, in a manner, with a wonder, staid a while without any word, afterward he said: 'When thou art whipped, go at thy pleasure, for now will I go as I shall think good.'

"You may remember also the foolish matter that not long ago the Duke rehearsed of the Abbot that, being present upon a day when Duke Federico was talking where he should bestow the great quantity of rubbish that was cast up to lay the foundation of this palace, working daily upon it, said, 'My Lord, I have well bethought me where you shall bestow it; let a great pit be digged, and into that you may have it cast without any more ado.' Duke Federico answered him, not without laughter: 'And where shall we bestow then the quantity of earth that shall be cast out of that pit?' The Abbot said unto him: 'Let it be made so large that it may

well receive both the one and the other.' And so for all the Duke repeated, sundry times, the greater the pit was, the more earth should be cast out of it, yet could he never make it sink into his brain but it might be made so large that it might receive both the one and the other; and he answered him nothing else but 'Make it so much the larger.' Now see what a good forecast this Abbot had."

Then said Messer Pietro Bembo: "And why tell you not that of your great Captain of Florence that was besieged of the Duke of Calabria within Castellina? Where there were found upon a day in the town certain quarrels poisoned that had been shot out of the camp, he wrote unto the Duke, that if the war should proceed so cruelly, he would also put a medicine upon his gunstones, and then he that hath the worst hath his mends in his hands."

Messer Bernardo laughed and said: "If you hold not your peace, Messer Pietro, I will tell whatsoever I have seen myself and hear of your Venetians, which is not a little, and especially when they play the riders."

"Do not, I beseech you," answered Messer Pietro, "for I will keep to myself two other very pretty ones that I know of your Florentines."

Messer Bernardo said: "They are rather of the Seneses, for it often happeneth among them. As within these few days one of them hearing certain letters read in the council chamber, in which for avoiding too often a repetition of his name that was spoken of, this term was many times put in, 'il Prelabato,' which signifieth the aforenamed, he said unto him that read them: 'Soft, stay there a little and tell me, this Prelabato what is he? —a friend to our communality?' "

Messer Pietro laughed, then he proceeded: "I speak of Florentines and not of Seneses."

"Speak it hardly," quoth the Lady Emilia, "and bash not for that matter."

Messer Pietro said: "When the Lords of Florence were in war against the Pisans, they were otherwhile out of money by reason of their great charges, and laying their heads together upon a day in the council chamber what way were best to make provision to serve their turn withal, after many devices propounded, one of the ancientest citizens said: 'I have found two ways, whereby without much travail we may in a small while come by a good portion of money. Whereof the one is, because we have no readier rent than the custom at the gates of Florence, where we have eleven gates, let us with speed make eleven more, and so shall we double our revenue. The other way is, to set up a mint in Pistoia and another in Prato, no more nor less than is here within Florence, and there do nothing else day and night but coin money, and all ducats of gold; and this device, in mine opinion, is the speedier and less chargeable.' "

They fell a-laughing apace at the subtle device of this citizen, and when laughing was ceased the Lady Emilia said: "Will you, Messer Bernardo, suffer Messer Pietro thus to jest at Florentines without a revenge?"

Messer Bernardo answered, smiling: "I pardon him this offense; for where he hath displeased me in jesting at Florentines, he hath pleased me in obeying of you, the which I would always do myself."

Then said the Lord Cesare: "I heard a Brescian speak a jolly gross matter, which, being this year in Venice at the feast of the Ascension, rehearsed in a place where

I was, to certain mates of his, the goodly matters he had seen there, what sundry merchandise, what plate, what sorts of spices, and what cloth and silk there was, then how the Signoria issued out with a great pomp in Bucentoro to wed the sea, in which were so many gentlemen well appareled, so many sorts of instruments and melodies, that a man would have thought it a paradise. And when one of his companions demanded him what kind of music did please him best of all that he had heard there, he said: 'All were good, yet among the rest I saw one blow in a strange trumpet, which at every push thrust it into his throat more than two handful, and then by-and-by drew it out again, and thrust it in afresh, that you never saw a greater wonder.' "

Then they all laughed, understanding the fond imagination of him that thought the blower thrust into his throat that part of the sackbut that is hid in putting it back again.

Then Messer Bernardo went forward: "Those affectations and curiosities that are but mean, bring a loathsomeness with them, but when they be done out of measure they much provoke laughter. As otherwhile when some men are heard to speak of their ancientry and nobleness of birth, sometime women of their beauty and handsomeness, as not long ago a gentlewoman did, which at a great feast, being very sad and musing with herself, it was demanded of her what she thought upon that should make her so sad. And she made answer, 'I thought upon a matter which as oft as it cometh into my mind doth much trouble me, and I can not put it out of my heart, which is, where in the day of general judgment all bodies must arise again and appear naked before the judgment-seat of Christ, I cannot abide the grief

I feel in thinking that mine must also be seen naked.' Such affectations as these be, because they pass the degree, do rather provoke laughter than loathsomeness. Those feat lies now that come so well to purpose, how they provoke laughter you all know. And that friend of ours that suffereth us not to want, within these few days rehearsed one to me that was very excellent."

Then the Lord Giuliano: "Whatever it were, more excellenter it can not be, nor more subtler, than one that a Tuscan of ours, which is a merchantman of Lucca, affirmed unto me the last day for most certain."

"Tell it us," quoth the Duchess.

Lord Giuliano said, smiling: "This merchantman, as he saith, being upon a time in Polonia, determined to buy a quantity of sables, minding to bring them into Italy and to gain greatly by them. And after much practising in the matter, where he could not himself go into Muscovia, because of the war between the King of Polonia and the Duke of Muscovia, he took order by the mean of some of the country that upon a day appointed certain merchantmen of Muscovia should come with their sables into the borders of Polonia, and he promised to be there himself to bargain with them. This merchantman of Lucca traveling then with his company toward Muscovia, arrived at the river of Boristhenes, which he found hard frozen like a marble stone, and saw the Muscovites which for suspicion of war were in doubt of the Polacks, were on the other side, and nearer came not than the breadth of the river. So after they knew the one the other, making certain signs, the Muscovites began to speak aloud and told the price how they would sell their sables, but the cold was so extreme that they were not understood, because

the words, before they came on the other side where this mercant of Lucca was and his interpreters, were congealed in the air and there remained frozen and stopped. So that the Polacks, that knew the manner, made no more ado but kindled a great fire in the midst of the river (for to their seeming that was the point whereto the voice came hot before the frost took it), and the river was so thick frozen that it did well bear the fire. When they had thus done, the words that for space of an hour had been frozen began to thaw and came down, making a noise as doth the snow from the mountains in May, and so immediately they were well understood; but the men on the other side were first departed, and because he thought that those words asked too great a price for the sables, he would not bargain, and so came away."

Then they laughed all. And Messer Bernardo; "Truly," quoth he, "this that I will tell you is not so subtle, yet it is a pretty matter, and this it is. Where talk was a few days ago of the country or world newly found out by the mariners of Portugal, and of strange beasts and other matters brought thence, that friend I told you of affirmed that he had seen an ape, very diverse in shape from such as we are accustomed to see, that played excellently well at chess. And among other times upon a day, before the King of Portugal, the gentleman that brought her played at chess with her, where the ape showed some draughts very subtle, so that she put him to his shifts, and at length she gave him checkmate. Upon this the gentleman, being somewhat vexed, as commonly they are that lose at that game, took the King in his hand, which was good and big, as the fashion is among the Portugals, and reached the ape a great knock on the head. She forthwith leaped aside, complain-

ing greatly, and seemed to require justice at the King's hands for the wrong done her. The gentleman afterward called her to play with him again, the which with signs she refused a while, but at last was contented to play another game, and as she had done the other time before, so did she now drive him to a narrow point. In conclusion: the ape perceiving she could give the gentleman the mate, thought with a new device she would be sure to escape without any more knocks, and privily conveyed her right hand, without making semblant what her intent was, under the gentleman's left elbow, leaning for pleasure upon a little taffeta cushion, and snatching it slightly away, at one instant gave him with her left hand a mate with a pawn, and with her right hand cast the cushion upon her head to save her from strokes; then she made a gambol before the King joyfully, in token, as it were, of her victory. Now see whether this ape were not wise, circumspect, and of a good understanding."

So proceeding on in his talk, Messer Bernardo said: "You have understood therefore what jests are that be of effect and communication without interruption as much as cometh to mind; therefore it shall be well now we speak of such as consist in one saying alone and have a quick sharpness that lieth briefly in a sentence or in a word. And even as in the first kind of merry talk a man must in his protestation and counterfeiting take heed that he be not like common jesters and parasites, and such as with fond matters move men to laugh, so in this brief kind the Courtier must be circumspect that he appear not malicious and venomous and speak taunts and quips only for spite and to touch the quick.

"But of doubtful words there be many sorts, therefore

must a man be circumspect and choose out terms very artificially, and leave out such as make the jest cold, and that a man would ween were haled by the hair, or else, as we have said, that have too much bitterness in them. They have a very good grace that arise when a man at the nipping talk of his fellow taketh the very same words in the selfsame sense, and returneth them back again, pricking him with his own weapon. Of this sort was it when Galeotto of Narni, passing through Siena, stayed in a street to inquire for an inn, and a Senese, seeing him so corpulent as he was, said laughing: 'Other men carry their budgets behind them, and this good fellow carrieth his before him.' Galeotto answered immediately: 'So must men do in the country of thieves.' There is yet another sort called in Italian *bischizzi,* and that consisteth in changing or increasing or diminishing of a letter or syllable. Also merry sayings are much to the purpose to nip a man, as well as grave sayings to praise one, so the metaphors be well applied, and especially if they be answered and he that maketh answer continue in the selfsame metaphor spoken by the other. You may see that this place is common both for the one and the other kind of jests, and so are many more, of the which a man might give infinite examples, and especially in grave sayings. King Louis, which is now French King, where it was said unto him, soon after his creation, that then was the time to be even with his enemies that had done him so much injury while he was Duke of Orleans, he made answer that 'the French King hath nothing ado to revenge the wrongs done to the Duke of Orleans.' And in a manner after the same sort, saving it had a little more matter to laugh at, was that the Archbishop of Florence said unto Cardinal Alexandrino that men

have nothing but substance, a body, and a soul; their substance is at lawyers' disposing, their body at physicians', and their soul at divines'."

Then answered the Lord Giuliano: "A man might add unto this the saying of Niccholetto, which is, that it is seldom seen a lawyer to go to law, nor a physician take medicine, nor a divine a good Christian."

Messer Bernardo laughed, then he proceeded: "Of this there be infinite examples spoken by great princes and very grave men. But a man laugheth also many times at comparisons. There be some that have a pastime to liken men and women to horses, to dogs, to birds, and oftentimes to coffers, to stools, to carts, to candlesticks, which sometimes hath a good grace and otherwhile very stale. Therefore in this point a man must consider the place, the time, the persons, and the other things we have so many times spoken of."

Then spake the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino: "The comparison that the Lord Giovanni Gonzaga made of Alexander the Great to Alexander his son was very pleasant."

"I wot not what it was," answered Messer Bernardo.

The Lord Gaspar said: "The Lord Giovanni was playing at dice, as his use is, and had lost a number of ducats and was still on the losing hand, and Messer Alexander his son, which, for all he is a child, delighteth no less in play than his father, stood very still to behold him, and seemed very sad. The Count of Pianella, that was there present with many other gentlemen, then said: 'See, my Lord, Messer Alexander is very heavy for your loss, and his heart panteth, waiting when luck will come to you, that he may get some of your winnings. Therefore rid him of this grief, and before you lose the rest, give him at the least one ducat that he may go play

him too, among his companions.' Then said the Lord Giovanni: 'You are deceived, for Alexander thinketh not upon such a trifle, but as it is written of Alexander the Great, while he was a child, understanding that Philip his father had discomfited a great army, and conquered a certain kingdom, he fell in weeping, and when he was asked the question why he wept, he answered, because he doubted that his father would conquer so many countries that he should have none left for him to conquer. Even so now Alexander my son is sorry and ready to weep in seeing me his father lose, because he doubteth that I shall lose so much, that I shall leave him nothing at all to lose.'

When they had a while laughed at this, Messer Bernardo went forward: "A man must take heed also his jesting be not wicked, and that the matter extend not, to appear quickwitted, to blasphemy, and study therein to invent new ways, lest herein, where a man deserveth not only blame but also sharp punishment, he should appear to seek a praise, which is an abominable matter. Methink I have named unto you many instances out of the which a man may pick pleasant and witty sayings, which afterward have so much the more grace as they are set forth with a comely protestation. Yet may there be alleged many other also, as when, to increase or diminish, things be spoken that incredibly pass the likelihood of truth. And of this sort was that the Lord Giuliano here said, that Golpino his servant was so lean and dry that in a morning as he was blowing the fire to kindle it, the smoke bore him up the chimney into the funnel, and had gone away with him had he not stuck on cross at one of the holes above. And Messer Augustino Bevazzano told that a covetous man, which

would not sell his corn while it was at a high price, when he saw afterward it had a great fall, for desperation he hanged himself upon a beam in his chamber, and a servant of his, hearing the noise, made speed and seeing his master hang, forthwith cut in sunder the rope and so saved him from death. Afterward, when the covetous man came to himself, he would have had his servant to pay him for his halter that he had cut. Of this sort appeareth to be also that Lorenzo de' Medici said unto one who in a morning had found him in bed very late and blamed him for sleeping so much, saying: 'I have now been in the new and old market-place, afterward I went out at the gate of San Gallo to walk about the walls, and have done a thousand other matters, and you are yet in bed.' Then said Lorenzo: 'That I have dreamed in one hour is more worth than all that you have done in four.' That is in like manner an honest and comely kind of jesting that consisteth in a certain dissimulation, when a man speaketh one thing and privily meaneth another. I speak not of the manner that is clean contrary, as if one should call a dwarf a giant and a black man white, or one most ill-favored beautiful, because they be too open contraries, although otherwhile also they stir a man to laugh. But when with a grave and dry speech in sporting a man speaketh pleasantly that he hath not in his mind.

"And the kind of jesting that is somewhat grounded upon scoffing seemeth very meet for great men, because it is grave and witty and may be used both in sporting matters and also in grave. Therefore did many of old time and men of best estimation use it, as Cato and Scipio Africanus minor. But above all they say Socrates the philosopher excelled in it. And in our time King

Alfonso the First of Aragon, which upon a time, as he went to dinner, took many rich jewels from his fingers, for wetting them in washing his hands, and so gave them to him that stood next him as though he had not minded who it was. This servant had thought sure the King marked not to whom he gave them, and, because his head was busied with more weighty affairs, would soon forget them clean, and thereof he took the more assurance when he saw the King asked not for them again. And when the matter was passed certain days, weeks and months without hearing any word of it, he thought surely he was safe. And so about the year's end after this matter had happened, another time as the King was in like manner going to dinner, he stepped forth and put out his hand to take the King's rings. Then the King, rounding him in the ear, said: 'The first is well for thee; these shall be good for another.' See this taunt how pleasant, witty, and grave it is, and worthy in very deed for the noble courage of an Alexander. Like unto this matter grounded upon scoffing there is also another kind, when, with honest words, a man nameth a vicious matter or a thing that deserveth blame. There be also petty taunts when a man of the very communication of his fellow taketh that he would not. Certain sayings there are when a man that is known to be witty speaketh a matter that seemeth to proceed of folly. As the last day Messer Camillo Paleotto said by one: 'That fool, as soon as he began to wax rich, died.' There is like unto this manner a certain witty and kind dissimulation, when a man, as I have said, that is wise maketh semblant not to understand that he doth understand. After this sort was that Scipio Masica said unto Ennius. For when Scipio went unto Ennius's house to speak to him,

and called to him in the street, a maiden of his made him answer that he was not at home. And Scipio heard plainly Ennius himself say unto his maiden to tell him that he was not at home, so he departed. Within a while afterward Ennius came unto Scipio's house, and so likewise stood beneath and called him. Unto whom Scipio himself with a loud voice made answer that he was not at home. Then said Ennius, 'What, do not I know thy voice?' Scipio answered: 'Thou hast small courtesy in thee; the last day I believed thy maiden that thou was not at home, and now wilt not thou believe me myself?' It is also pretty when one is touched in the very same matter that he hath first touched his fellow. As Alonso Carillo, being in the Spanish court and having committed certain youthful parts that were of no great importance, was by the King's commandment carried to prison and there abode for one night. The next day he was taken out again, and when he came to the palace in the morning, he entered into the chamber of presence that was full of gentlemen and ladies, and jesting together at this his imprisonment, Mistress Boadilla said: 'Messer Alonso, I took great thought for this mishap of yours, for all that knew you were in fear lest the King would have hanged you.' Then said immediately Alonso: 'Indeed, Mistress, I was in doubt of the matter myself too, but yet I had a good hope that you would have begged me for your husband.' See how sharp and witty this is; because in Spain, as in many other places also, the manner is, when a man is led to execution, if a common harlot will ask him for her husband, it saveth his life.

"Also those jests are pleasant that have in them a certain privy semblant of laughter. As when a husband

lamented much and bewailed his wife that had hanged herself upon a figtree, another came to him and plucking him by the sleeve said: 'Friend, may I receive such pleasure as to have a graft of that figtree to graft in some stock of mine orchard?' There be certain other jests that be patient and spoken softly with a kind of gravity. As a man of the country carrying a coffer upon his shoulders, chanced therewithal to give Cato a hard push, and afterward said: 'Give room.' Cato answered: 'Hast thou anything upon thy shoulders beside that coffer?' It is also a matter of laughter when a man hath committed an error and to amend it speaketh a matter purposely that appeareth foolish, and yet is applied to the end that he hath appointed, and serveth his turn therewithal that he seem not out of countenance and dismayed. As not long since two enemies being together in the council-chamber of Florence, as it happeneth often in those commonweals, the one which was of the house of Altoviti, slept, and he that sat next unto him, for a sport, where his adversary, that was of the house of Alamanni, had said nothing neither then nor before, stirring him with his elbow made him awake, and said unto him: 'Hearest thou not what such a one saith? Make answer, for the Lords ask for thine advice.' Then did Altoviti all sleepy arise upon his feet and, without any more deliberation, said: 'My Lords, I say the clean contrary to that Alamanni hath spoken.' Alamanni answered: 'What? I have said nothing.' Altoviti said immediately: 'To that thou wilt speak.' In this manner also did your Messer Seraphin the physician, here in Urbino, say unto a man of the country, which had received such a stroke upon the eye that in very deed it was out, yet thought he best to go seek to Messer

Seraphin for remedy. When he saw it, though he knew it was past cure, yet to pluck money out of his hands as that blow had plucked the eye out of his head, he promised him largely to heal it. And so he was in hand with him every day for money, putting him in comfort that within six or seven days he should begin to see with it again. The poor countryman gave him the little he had, but when he saw him so prolong the matter, he began to find himself aggrieved with the physician, and said that he was nothing the better, neither could he see any more with that eye than if he had had none at all in his head. At last Messer Seraphin, perceiving there was no more to be gotten at his hands, said: 'Brother mine, thou must have patience; thou hast clean lost thine eye, and no remedy is there for it; pray God thou lose not thine other withal.' The countryman, seeing this, fell in weeping, and lamented much and said: 'Master mine, you have pilled me and robbed me of my money; I will complain to the Duke,' and made the greatest outcry in the world. Then said Messer Seraphin in a rage and to clear himself: 'Ah, thou villain knave! thou wouldest then have two eyes as citizens and honest men have, wouldest thou? Get thee hence, in the devil's name.' And these words were thrust out with such fury that the poor silly man was dismayed, and held his peace and soft and fair departed in God's name, thinking that he himself had been in the wrong.

"It is also pretty when a man declareth or interpreteth a matter merrily, and it is like unto this when a man giveth familiar admonition in manner of counsel, but dissembling. As Cosimo de' Medici said unto a friend of his that had more riches than wit, and by

Cosimo's means had compassed an office without Florence, and at his setting forth asking Cosimo what way he thought best for him to take to execute this office well, Cosimo answered him: 'Apparel thyself in scarlet, and speak little.' Of this sort was this Count Lodovico said unto one that would pass for an unknown person in a certain dangerous place, and wist not how to disguise himself, and the Count being demanded of his advice therein, answered: 'Apparel thyself like a doctor, or in some other raiment that wise men use to wear.' A man laugheth also at certain matters disagreeing. As one said the last day unto Messer Antonio Rizzo of a certain Forlivese: 'Guess whether he be a fool or no, for his name is Bartholomew.' And another: 'Thou seekest a rider, and hast no horses. And this man wanteth nothing but good and a horse.'

"It is pretty, moreover, to use metaphors at a time in such purposes. As our Messer Marcantonio that said to Botton da Cesena, who had vexed him with words: 'Botton, Botton, thou shalt one day be the botton, and the halter shall be the bottonhole.' And also when Marcantonio had made a comedy which was very long and of sundry acts, the very same Botton said in like manner to Marcantonio: 'To play your comedy you shall need for preparation as much wood as is in Sclavonia.' Messer Marcantonio answered: 'And for preparation of thy tragedy three trees is enough.' Again a man speaketh a word many times wherein is a privy signification far from that appeareth he would say. As the Lord General here being in company where there was communication of a captain that indeed all his lifetime for the more part had received the overthrow, and as then by a chance won the victory, and when he that

ministered this talk said when he made his entry into that town he was appareled in a very fair crimson velvet coat, which he wore always after his victories, the Lord General said: 'Belike it is very new.' And no less doth it provoke laughter when otherwhile a man maketh answer unto that which the other he talketh withal hath not spoken, or else seemeth to believe he hath done that he hath not done, and should have done it. As Andrew Cosia, when he went to visit a gentleman that discourteously suffered him to stand, while he himself sat, said: 'Since you command me, sir, to obey you, I will sit,' and so sat him down. Also a man laugheth when one accuseth himself of some trespass. As the last day when I said to the Duke's chaplain, that my Lord's Grace had a chaplain that could say mass sooner than he, he answered me, 'It is not possible,' and rounding me in the ear said, 'You shall understand that I say not the third part of the secrets.'

"It hath also many times a good grace to wish those things that can not be. As the last day one of our company, beholding all these gentlemen here playing at fence, and he lying upon a bed said: 'Oh, what a pleasure it were, were this also a valiant man's and a good soldier's exercise.' In like manner, it is a pretty and witty kind of speaking, and especially in grave men and of authority, to answer contrary to that he would with whom he speaketh, but dryly and, as it were, with a certain doubting and heedful consideration. As in times past Alfonso the First, King of Aragon, giving unto a servant of his horse, harness, and apparel, because he told him how the night before he had dreamed that his Majesty had given him all that kind of matters, and not long after the very same servant said again

how he dreamed that night that he had given him a good sort of royals, he answered him: 'Henceforth believe dreams no more, for they are not always true.' In this sort also did the Pope answer the Bishop of Cervia, that to grope his mind said unto him: 'Holy Father, it is noised all Rome over, and in the palace too, that your Holiness maketh me Governor.' Then answered the Pope: 'Let the knaves speak what they lust, doubt you not, it is not true, I warrant you.'

"I could, my Lords, beside these gather many other places from which a man may derive merry and pleasant jests, as matters spoken with fear, with marvel, with threatenings out of order, with overmuch furiousness; beside this, certain newly happened cases provoke laughter; sometime silence with a certain wonder; at other times very laughter itself without purpose. But methink I have now spoken sufficient; for the jests that consist in words, I believe, pass not these bounds we have reasoned of. As for such as be in operation, though there be infinite parts of them, yet are they drawn into few principles. But in both kinds the chief matter is to deceive opinion, and to answer otherwise than the hearer looketh for; and, in case the jest shall have any grace, it must needs be seasoned with this deceit, or dissimulation, or mocking, or rebuking, or comparison, or whatever other kind a man will use. And although all kinds of jests move a man to laugh, yet do they also in this laughter make diverse effects. For some have in them a certain cleanness and modest pleasantness. Other bite sometime privily, otherwhile openly. Other have in them a certain wantonness. Other make one laugh as soon as he heareth them. Other the more a man thinketh upon them. Other in laughing make a

man blush withal. Other stir a man somewhat to anger. But in all kinds a man must consider the disposition of the minds of the hearers, because unto persons in adversity oftentimes merry toys augment their affliction, and some infirmities there be that the more a man occupieth medicine about them, the worse they wax. In case, therefore, the Courtier in jesting and speaking merry conceits have a respect to the time, to the persons, to his degree, and not use it too often (for, perdie, it bringeth a loathsomeness if a man stand evermore about it, all day in all kind of talk and without purpose), he may be called pleasant and feat conceited. So he be heedful also that he be not so bitter and biting that a man might conjecture he were an envious person in pricking without a cause, or for plain malice, or men of too great authority (which is lack of discretion) or of too much misery (which is cruelty) or too mischievous (which is vanity), or else in speaking matters that may offend them whom he would not offend (which is ignorance). For some there be that think they are bound to speak and to nip without regard, as often as they can, however the matter go afterward. And among this kind of persons are they that to speak a word that should seem to come of a readiness of wit, pause not for staining of a worthy gentlewoman's honesty, which is a very naughty matter and worthy sore punishment. Because in this point women are in the number of silly souls and persons in misery, and therefore deserve not to be nipped in it, for they have not weapon to defend themselves. But beside these respects he that will be pleasant and full of jesting, must be shaped of a certain nature apt to all kind of pleasantness, and unto that frame his fashions, gestures and countenance, the which

the more grave, steady and set it is, so much the more maketh it the matters spoken to seem witty and subtle. But you, Sir Federico, that thought to rest yourself under this my tree without leaves and in my withered reasonings, I believe you have repented yourself, and you reckon you are entered into the baiting-place of Montefiore. Therefore it shall be well done for you like a well practised Courtier, to avoid an ill hostelry, to arise somewhat before your ordinary hour and set forward on your journey."

"Nay," answered Sir Federico, "I am come to so good an hostelry that I mind to tarry in it longer than I had thought at the first. Therefore I will rest me yet a while, until you have made an end of all the talk you have begun withal. Whereof you have left out one parcel that you named at the beginning, which is, merry pranks; and it were not well done to deceive the company of it. But as you have taught us many pretty matters concerning jests, and made us hardy to use them through example of so many singular wits, great men, princes, kings and popes, I suppose you will likewise in merry pranks so bolden us that we may take a courage to practise some against you yourself."

Then said Messer Bernardo, smiling: "You shall not be the first, but perhaps it will not be your chance, for I have so many times been served with them that it maketh me look well about me. As dogs, after they have been once scalded with hot water, are afraid of the cold. Howbeit, since you will have me to speak somewhat of this too, I believe I may rid my hands of it in few words. And in mine opinion a merry prank is nothing else but a friendly deceit in matters that offend not at all or very little. And even as in jesting to speak contrary to

expectation moveth laughter, so doth in merry pranks to do contrary to expectation. And these do so much the more delight and are to be praised, as they be witty and modest. For he that will work a merry prank without respect doth many times offend, and then ariseth debates and sore hatred. But the places that a man may derive merry pranks from are, in a manner, the very same that be in jests. Therefore, to avoid repetition of them, I will say no more but that there be two kinds of merry pranks, every one of which may afterward be divided into more parts. The one is, when any man, whoever he be, is deceived wittily and after a feat manner and with pleasantness. The other, when a man layeth, as it were, a net, and showeth a piece of bait, so that a man runneth to be deceived of himself. The first is such as the merry prank was that within these few days was wrought unto a couple of great ladies, whom I will not name, by the means of a Spaniard called Castilio. Not many days since, in the court that I mean, arrived a man of the country about Bergamo, to be in service with a gentleman of the court; which was so well set out with garments and so finely clad, that for all his bringing up was always keeping oxen and could do nothing else, yet a man that had not heard him speak would have judged him a worthy gentleman. And so when those two ladies were informed that there was arrived a Spaniard, servant to Cardinal Borgia, whose name was Castilio, a very witty man, a musician, a dancer and the best Courtier in all Spain, they longed very much to speak with him, and sent incontinently for him, and after they had received him honorably, they caused him to sit down, and began to entertain him with a very great respect in the presence of all men, and few there

were present that knew him not to be a Bergamaske cowherd. Therefore, seeing those ladies entertain him with such respect, and honor him so much, they fell all in a-laughing, the more because the silly fellow spake still his native language, the mere Bergamaske tongue. But the gentlemen that devised this prank, had first told those ladies that among other things he was a great dissembler and spake all tongues excellently well, and especially the country speech of Lombardy, so that they thought he feigned, and many times they beheld the one the other with certain marvelings, and said: 'What a wonderful matter is this, how he counterfeiteth this tongue!' In conclusion, this communication lasted so long that every man's sides ached for laughing, and he could not choose himself but utter so many tokens of his nobleness of birth that at length those ladies, but with much ado, believed he was the man he was indeed. Such merry pranks we see daily, but among the rest they be pleasant that at the first make a man aghast and after that end in a matter of surety, because he that was deceived laugheth at himself when he perceiveth he was afraid of nothing. As, lying upon a time in Paglia, there chanced to be in the very same inn three other good fellows, two of Pistoia and one of Prato, which after supper, as the manner is for the most part, fell to gaming. And not long after, one of the Pistoians losing his rest, had not a farthing left to bless himself, but began to chafe, to curse, to bann and to blaspheme terribly, and thus he went to bed. The other two, after they had played a while, agreed to work a merry prank with him that was gone to bed. And when they perceived that he was fallen in sleep, they blew out the candles and covered up the fire and began to speak aloud, and to make

the greatest hurly-burly in the world, making wise to contend together about their game. The one said: 'Thou tookest the card underneath.' The other denying it said: 'Thou hast vied upon flush, let us mount'—and such other matters, with such noise that he that slept awoke, and hearing them at play and talking even as though they had seen the cards, did a little open his eyes. When he saw there was no manner light in the chamber, he said: 'What the devil mean you to cry thus all night?' Afterward he laid him down again to sleep. The other two companions gave him no manner answer, but still continued in their purpose until he awoke better and much wondered, and when he saw for certainty that there was neither fire nor any kind of light, and perceived they played still and fell in contention, he said: 'And how can you see the cards without light?' The one of the two answered: 'I ween thou hast lost thy sight as well as thy money. Seest thou not that we have here two candles?' He that was in bed lift up himself upon his elbows and, in a manner angered, said: 'Either I am drunken or blind, or else you make a lie.' The two arose and went to bed darkelong, laughing and making wise to believe that he went about to mock them. And he again said to them: 'I tell you truth, I see you not.' At length the two began to seem to wonder much, and the one said to the other: 'By good Lord, I believe he speaketh in good earnest, reach me the candle, and let us see lest perhaps he have some impediment in his sight.' Then thought the poor wretch surely that he had been blind, and weeping downright said: 'Oh, Sirs, I am blind.' And forthwith he began to call upon Our Lady of Loreto and to beseech her to pardon him his blasphemies and cursing for the loss of his money. But

his two companions put him in good comfort and said: 'It is not possible but thou shouldst see us. It is some fancy that thou hast conceived in thine head.' 'Oh, good Lord,' answered the other, 'it is no fancy, nor I see no more than if I had never had eyes in my head.' 'Thy sight is clear enough,' quoth the two. And the one said to the other: 'Mark how well he openeth his eyes? And how fair they be to look to? And who would believe but he could see?' The poor soul wept faster and cried God mercy. In conclusion, they said unto him: 'See thou make a vow to go devoutly to Our Lady of Loreto barefoot and barelegged, for that is the best remedy that may be had. And in the mean space we will go to Aquapendente and the other towns hereabout to seek for some physician, and will help thee in what we can.' Then did the silly soul kneel upon his knees in the bed, and with abundance of tears and very bitter repentance for his blaspheming, made a solemn vow to go naked to Our Lady of Loreto, and to offer unto her a pair of eyes of silver, and to eat no flesh upon the Wednesday, nor eggs upon the Friday, and to fast bread and water every Saturday in worship of Our Lady, if she give him the grace to receive his sight again. The two companions, entering into another chamber, lighted a candle, and came with the greatest laughter in the world before this poor soul, who for all he was rid of so great an anguish as you may think he had, yet he was so astonied with his former fear, that he could not only not laugh, but not once speak a word; and the two companions did nothing else but stir him, saying that he was bound to perform all those vows, for that he had received the grace he asked.

"Of the other kind of merry pranks, when a man de-

ceiveth himself, I will give you none other example but what happened unto me myself not long since. For this Shrovetide that is past, my Lord's grace of San Pietro ad Vincula, which knoweth full well what a delight I have when I am in maskerie to play merry pranks with friars, having first given order as he had devised the matter, came upon a day with my Lord of Aragon and certain other Cardinals, to the windows in the banks, making wise to stand there to see maskers pass to and fro, as the manner of Rome is. I being in maskerie passed by, and when I beheld on the one side of the street a friar standing, as it were, in a study with himself, I judged I had found that I sought for, and forthwith ran to him like a greedy hawk to her prey, and when I had asked him and he told me who he was, I made semblant to know him, and with many words began to make him believe that the marshal went about to seek him for certain complaints against him, and persuaded him to go with me to the Chancery, and there I would save him. The friar, dismayed and all trembling seemed as though he wist not what to do, and said that he doubted taking in case he should go far from Saint Celso. Still, I put him in good comfort, and said so much to him that he leaped up behind me, and then methought my device was fully accomplished. And I began to ride my horse by-and-by up and down the merchant streets, which went kicking and wincing. Imagine with yourselves now what a fair sight it was to behold a friar on horseback behind a masker, his garments fleeing abroad and his head shaking to and fro, that a man would have thought he had been always falling. With this fair sight, the gentlemen began to hurl eggs out at the windows, and afterward all the bankers and as many

as were there, so that the hail never fell with a more violence from the sky than eggs fell out from the windows, which for the most part came all upon me. And I, for that I was in maskerie, passed not upon the matter, and thought verily that all the laughing had been for the friar and not for me, and upon this went sundry times up and down the banks, always with that fury of hell behind me. And though the friar, in manner, weeping besought me to let him go down and not to show such shame to the weed, yet did the knave afterward privily cause eggs to be given him by certain lackeys set there for the nones, and, making wise to grip me hard for falling, squeezed them in my bosom, and many times on my head, and otherwhile in my forehead, so that I was foul arrayed. Finally, when every man was weary both of laughing and throwing eggs, he leaped down from behind me, and plucking his hood backward showed me a great bush of hair, and said: 'Messer Bernardo, I am a horse-keeper in the stable at San Pietro ad Vincula, and am he that looketh to your mulet.' Then wist I not which prevailed most in me, grief, anger, or shame. Yet for the less hurt I fled toward my lodging, and the next morning I durst not show my head abroad. But the laughing at that merry prank did not endure the day following only, but also lasteth, in a manner, until this day."

And so when they had a while renewed the laughing at rehearsing this again, Messer Bernardo proceeded: "It is also a good and pleasant kind of merry pranks, whence in like manner jests are derived, when one believeth that a man will do a matter which he will not indeed. As when I was in an evening after supper upon the bridge of Leo, and going together with Cesare Boc-

cadello, sporting one with another. we began to take holdfast the one of the other's arms, as though we would have wrestled, because then we perceived no man about the bridge; and we being in this manner together, there came two Frenchmen by, which seeing us thus striving, demanded what the matter meant, and stayed to part us, thinking we had been at debate in good earnest. Then said I incontinently: 'Help, sirs, for this poor gentleman at certain times of the moon is frantic, and see now how he striveth to cast himself off the bridge into the river.' Then did the two run and laid hand upon Cesare with me and held him strict. And he, saying always that I was out of my wit, struggled the more to wind himself out of their hands, and they gripped him so much the harder. At this the people assembled to behold our ruffling together, and every man ran, and the more poor Cesare laid about him with his hands and feet, for he began now to enter into choler, the more resort of people there was; and for the great strength he put, they believed verily that he would have leaped into the river, and therefore held they him the stricter, so that a great throng of people carried him to the inn above ground, all turmoiled and without his cap, pale for wrath and shame that nothing he spake could prevail, partly because those Frenchmen understood him not, and partly because I also carrying him to the inn did always bewail the poor soul's ill luck that was so waxed out of his wit. Now, as we have said, of merry pranks a man may talk at large, but it sufficeth to repeat that the places whence they are derived be the very same which we have said of jests. As, for examples, we have infinite which we see daily; and among the rest there are many pleasant in the tales of Boccaccio, as those that Bruno

and Buffalmacco played to their Calandrino, and to Messer Symon, and many other of women, which in very deed are witty and pretty. I remember also I have known in my days many that have been merrily disposed in this manner, and among the rest a scholar in Padua, born in Sicily, called Pontius, which seeing upon a time a man of the country have a couple of fat capons, feigning himself to buy them, was at a point with him for the price, and bade him come with him to his lodging, for beside his price he would give him somewhat to break his fast withal. And so brought him to a place where was a steeple that stood by himself, alone severed from the church, that a man might go around about him; and directly over against one of the four sides of the steeple was a lane. Here Pontius, when he had first bethought himself what he had to do, said unto the man of the country: 'I have laid these capons on a wager with a fellow of mine, who saith that this tower compasseth forty feet, and I say no, and even as I met with thee I had bought this packthread to measure it. Therefore, before we go to my lodging I will try which of us hath won the wager.' And in so saying he drew the packthread out of his sleeve and put the one end of it into the man of the country's hand, and said: 'Give here,' and so took the capons; and with the other end he began to go about the bell-tower, as though he would have measured it, making first the man of the country to stand still and to hold the packthread directly on the contrary side of the tower to that that was at the head of the lane, where, as soon as he came, he drove a nail into the wall, to the which he tied the packthread, and leaving it so, went his way without any more ado down the lane with the capons. The man of the country stood

still a good while, always looking when he would have done measuring. At length, after he had said many times, 'What do you so long?' he thought he would see, and found that Pontius held not the line, but a nail that was driven into the wall, which only remained for payment of his capons. Of this sort Pontius played many merry pranks. But the merry pranks that the Courtier ought to use, must, by mine advice, be somewhat wide from immoderate jesting. He ought also to take heed that his merry pranks turn not to pilfering, as we see many naughty nacks that wander about the world with divers shifts to get money, feigning now one matter, now another; and that they be not too bitter, and above all that he have respect and reverence, as well in this as in all other things, to women, and especially where the staining of their honesty shall consist."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "Truly, Messer Bernardo," quoth he, "you are too partial to these women. And why will you that men shall have more respect to women than women to men? Set you not as much by your honesty as they do by theirs? Think you, then, that women ought to nip men both with words and mocks in every matter without any regard, and men should stand with a flea in their ear, and thank them for it?"

Messer Bernardo answered: "I say not the contrary but women in their jests and merry pranks ought to have the respects to men which we have spoken of. Yet I say with more liberty may they touch men of small honesty than men may them. And that because we ourselves have established for a law that in us wanton life is no vice, nor default, nor any slander, and in women it is so great a reproach and shame that she that hath once an ill name, whether the report that goeth of her

be true or false, hath lost her credit forever. Therefore, since the talking of women's honesty is so dangerous a matter to offend them sore, I say that we ought to touch them in other matters and refrain from this. For when the jest or merry prank nippeth too sore, it goeth out of the bounds which we have already said is fit for a gentleman. But, as I have said, I will not swerve from my first purpose of merry pranks, and undertake such an enterprise so hard as is the defence of women against you that are a valiant champion. Therefore I will end this my communication, which perhaps hath been longer than needed, but out of peradventure not so pleasant as you looked for."

Then spake the Duchess: "Because it is very late, I will we defer the whole until to-morrow, the more for that I think it well done we follow the Lord Giuliano's counsel, that before we come to this disputation we may have a gentlewoman of the palace so fashioned in all perfections as these lords have fashioned the perfect Courtier."

"Madam," quoth the Lady Emilia, "then, I pray God it fall not to our lot to give this enterprise to any confederate with the Lord Gaspar, lest he fashion us, for a gentlewoman of the court, one that can do naught else but look to the kitchen and spin."

Then said Frisio: "Indeed, that is an office fit for her."

Then the Duchess: "I have good hope in the Lord Giuliano, who will, for the good wit and judgment I know he is of, imagine the greatest perfection that may be wished in a woman, and in like manner express it well in words, and so shall we have somewhat to confound the Lord Gaspar's false accusations withal."

"Madam," answered the Lord Giuliano, "I wot not whether your device be good or no, to commit into my hands an enterprise of so great weight; for, to tell you the truth, I think not myself able enough. Neither am I like the Count and Sir Federico, which with their eloquence have shaped such a Courtier as never was, nor I believe ever shall be. Yet if your pleasure be so that I shall take this burden upon me, let it be at the least with those conditions that the other have had before me, namely, that every man, where he shall think good, may reply against me, and this shall I reckon not overthwarting but aid, and perhaps in correcting mine errors we shall find the perfection of a gentlewoman of the palace which we seek for."

"I trust," answered the Duchess, "your talk shall be such that little shall be said against you. Therefore settle your mind to think upon only this, and fashion us such a gentlewoman that these our adversaries may be ashamed to say that she is not equal with the Courtier in virtue, of whom it shall be well done Sir Federico speak no more, for he hath but too well set him forth, especially since we must compare a woman with him."

"I have, Madam," answered Sir Federico, "little or nothing now left to speak of the Courtier, and that I did think upon Messer Bernardo's jests have made me forget."

"If it be so," quoth the Duchess, "assembling together to-morrow betimes, we shall have leisure to accomplish both the one and the other."

And when she had so said, they arose all, and taking their leave reverently of the Duchess every man withdrew him to his lodging.

BOOK THIRD

IT is read that Pythagoras very wittily and after a subtle manner found out the measure of Hercules's body, in that he knew that the space where every five years they kept the games or prizes of Olympus in Achaia, nigh unto Elis, before the temple of Jupiter Olympus, was measured by Hercules himself, and appointed a furlong of ground there of six hundred and five and twenty of his own feet; and the other furlongs which after his time were cast out in divers parts of Greece by his successors, were also of six hundred and five and twenty of their feet, but for all that somewhat shorter than his. Pythagoras knew forthwith by that proportion how much Hercules's foot was bigger than all other men's feet, and so, the measure of his foot once known, he gathered that all Hercules's body proportionally in greatness exceeded all other men's so much as that furlong all other furlongs. You may then, gentle Messer Alfonso, by the very same reason easily gather by this least part of all the rest of the body, how far the Court of Urbino excelled all the other in Italy. For if the sports and pastimes, that are used to none other end but to refresh the wearisome minds after earnest labors, far passed all such as are commonly used in the other courts of Italy, what, guess you, were all the other virtuous practices, whereunto all men had their minds bent and were full and wholly addicted? And of this I may be bold to make my vaunt, nothing mistrusting but to be credited therein, considering I go

not about to praise so ancient antiquities wherein I might, if I were disposed, feign what I lusted. But of this I speak, I am able to bring forth many men of worthy credence, for sufficient trial, which as yet are in life and have themselves seen and marked well the living and conversation of such as in times past excelled in that court. And I reckon myself bound, for that lieth in me to do, to stretch forth my force with all diligence to defend this famous memory from mortal oblivion, and with my pen to make it live in the minds of our posterity, whereby perhaps in time to come there shall not want that shall envy this our time. For there is not man that readeth of the wonderful families of times past, but in his mind he conceiveth a certain greater opinion of them that are written upon than it appeareth those books can express, though they have been written with perfection. Even so do we consider that all the readers of this our travail, if at the leastwise it shall deserve so much favor that it may come to the sight of noble men and virtuous ladies, will cast in their mind and think for a surety that the Court of Urbino hath been much more excellent and better furnished with notable men than we are able to express in writing. And in case so much eloquence were in me as there was prowess in them, I should need none other testimony to make such give full credence to my words as have not seen it.

When, therefore, the company was assembled in the accustomed place the day following, at the due hour, and set with silence, every man turned his eyes to Sir Federico and to the Lord Giuliano waiting when the one of them would begin to speak his mind.

Wherefore the Duchess, after she had been still a while: "My Lord Giuliano," quoth she, "every man's de-

sire is to see this your gentlewoman well set forth; and if you show us her not in such manner that all her beauties may be discerned, we will suspect that you are jealous over her."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "Madam, if I reckoned her beautiful, I would show you her without any other setting forth and in such wise as Paris did behold the three goddesses. But in case these ladies be not a help to me to trim her, who can do it right well, I doubt me that not only the Lords Gaspar and Frisio, but all the other lords here shall have a just cause to speak ill of her. Therefore, since she is in some part deemed beautiful, perhaps it shall be better to keep her close and see what Sir Federico hath yet behind to speak of the Courtier, which, no doubt, is much more beautiful than my woman can be."

"That I had in mind," answered Sir Federico, "is not so necessary for the Courtier but it may be left out, and no hurt done. Yea, it is a contrary matter almost to that hitherto hath been reasoned of."

"And what matter is it, then?" quoth the Duchess.

Sir Federico answered: "I was purposed, in what I could, to declare the causes of these companies and orders of knights brought up by great princes under diverse standards, as is that of Saint Michael in the House of France, the Order of the Garter under the title of Saint George in the House of England, the Golden Fleece in the House of Burgundy, and how these dignities be given, and in what sort they that deserve are degraded from them, how they first came up, who were the founders of them, and to what end they were ordained; because we see that these knights in great courts are always highly esteemed. I minded also, if time had suf-

ficed me, beside the diversity of manners used in the courts of Christian princes in feasting and appearing in open shows, to speak somewhat also of the great Turks; but much more particularly of the Sofia, King of Persia; for when I understood, by merchantmen a long time trafficked in that country, the noblemen there to be very full of prowess and well mannered and use in their conversation one with another, and in women's service, and in all their practisings, much courtesy and great sobriety, and when time serveth, in martial feats, in sportings, and undertaking enterprises of much sumptuousness, great liberality and bravery, I delighted to know what order they take in these things which they set most store by, wherein their pomps consist and braveries of garments and armor, wherein they differ from us, and wherein we agree, what kind of entertainment their women use, and with what sober mode they show favor to whoso is in their love service. But, to say the truth, it is no fit time now to enter into this talk, especially since there is other to be said, and much more to our purpose than this."

"Yes," quoth the Lord Gaspar, "both this and many other things be more to the purpose than to fashion this gentlewoman of the palace, forsomuch as the very same rules that are given for the Courtier, serve also for the woman; for as well ought she to have respect to times and places and to observe, as much as her weakness is able to bear, all the other proprieties that have been so much reasoned upon as the Courtier. And therefore, instead of this, it were not perhaps amiss to teach some particular points that belong to the service about a prince's person, for no doubt the Courtier ought to know them and to have a grace in doing them. Or

else to speak of the way that he ought to take in the bodily exercises, how to ride, how to handle weapon, and wrestle, and wherein consisteth the hardness of these feats.

Then spake the Duchess, smiling: "Princes are not served about their persons with so excellent a Courtier as this is. As for the exercises of body and strength and slightness of person, we will leave them for Messer Pietro Monta here to take charge to teach them when he shall think most meet; for presently the Lord Giuliano hath nothing else to speak of, but of this woman, whom, methink, you now begin to have a fear of, therefore would bring us out of our purpose."

Frisio answered: "Certain it is that now it is needless and out of purpose to talk of women, especially being yet behind some what to be spoken of the Courtier, for the one matter ought not to be mingled with the other."

"You are in a great error," answered the Lord Cesare Gonzaga, "for, like as no Court, how great ever it be, can have any sightliness, or brightness in it, or mirth, without women, nor any Courtier can be gracious, pleasant or hardy, nor at any time undertake any gallant enterprise of chivalry, unless he be stirred with the conversation and with the love and contentation of women, even so in like case the Courtier's talk is most unperfect evermore, if the intercourse of women give him not a part of the grace wherewithal he make perfect and deck out his playing the Courtier."

The Lord Octaviano laughed and said: "Behold a piece of the bait that bringeth men out of their wits!"

Then the Lord Giuliano, turning him to the Duchess: "Madam," quoth he, "since it is so your pleasure, I will

speak that cometh to mind, but with very great doubt to satisfy. And I wis a great deal less pain it were for me to fashion a lady that should deserve to be queen of the world, than a perfect gentlewoman of the court; for of her I wot not where to fetch any pattern, but for a queen I should not need to seek far, and sufficient it were for me only to imagine the heavenly conditions of a lady whom I know, and, through seeing them, direct all my thoughts to express plainly with words the thing that many see with their eyes, and, where I could do no more, yet should I fulfil my duty in naming her."

Then said the Duchess: "Pass not your bounds, my Lord Giuliano, but mind the order given, and fashion the gentlewoman of the palace, that this so worthy a mistress may have him that shall worthily serve her."

The Lord Giuliano proceeded: "For a proof, therefore, Madam, that your commandment may drive me to assay to do, yea the thing I have no skill in, I shall speak of this excellent woman as I would have her. And when I have fashioned her after my mind, and can afterward get none other, I will take her as mine own, after the example of Pygmalion. And whereas the Lord Gaspar hath said that the very same rules that are given for the Courtier serve also for the woman, I am of a contrary opinion. For albeit some qualities are common and necessary as well for the woman as for the man, yet are there some other more meeter for the woman than for the man, and some again meet for the man that she ought in no wise to meddle withal. The very same I say of the exercises of the body. But principally in her fashions, manners, words, gestures and conversation, methink, the woman ought to be much unlike the man. For right as it is seemly for him to show a

certain manliness full and steady, so doeth it well in a woman to have a tenderness, soft and mild, with a kind of womanly sweetness in every gesture of hers, that in going, standing, and speaking whatever she lusteth, may always make her appear a woman without any likeness of man. Adding, therefore, this principle to the rules that these lords have taught the Courtier, I think well she may serve her turn with many of them, and be endowed with very good qualities, as the Lord Gaspar saith. For many virtues of the mind I reckon be as necessary for a woman as for a man. Likewise nobleness of birth, avoiding affectation or curiosity, to have a good grace of nature in all her doings, to be of good conditions, witty, foreseeing, not haughty, not envious, not ill-tongued, not light, not contentious, not untowardly, to have the knowledge to win and keep the good will of her lady and of all others, to do well and with a good grace the exercise comely for women. Methink well beauty is more necessary in her than in the Courtier, for, to say the truth, there is a great lack in the woman that wanteth beauty. She ought also to be more circumspect and to take better heed that she give no occasion to be ill reported of, and so to behave herself that she be not only not spotted for any fault, but not so much as with suspicion. Because a woman hath not so many ways to defend herself from slanderous reports as hath a man. But for so much as Count Lodovico very particularly expressed the principal profession of the Courtier, and willeth it to be in martial feats, methink also behoofful to utter, according to my judgment, what the Gentlewoman of the Palace ought to be; in which point when I have thoroughly satisfied, I shall think myself rid of the greatest part of my duty. Leav-

ing, therefore, apart the virtues of the mind that ought to be common to her with the Courtier—as wisdom, nobleness of courage, staidness, and many more—and likewise the conditions that are meet for all women—as to be good and discreet, to have the understanding to order her husband's goods and her house and children when she is married, and all those parts that belong to a good housewife—I say, for her that liveth at court, methink there belongeth unto her, above all other things, a certain sweetness in language that may delight, whereby she may gently entertain all kind of men with talk worth the hearing and honest, and applied to the time and place, and to the degree of the person she communeth withal; accompanying with sober and quiet manners and with the honesty that must always be a stay to all her deeds, a ready liveliness of wit, whereby she may declare herself far wide from all dulness, but with such a kind of goodness that she may be esteemed no less chaste, wise, and courteous, than pleasant, feat conceited, and sober; and therefore must she keep a certain mean very hard and, in a manner, derived of contrary matters, and come just to certain limits, but not pass them. This woman ought not, therefore, to make herself good and honest, be so schemish and make wise to abhor both the company and the talk, though somewhat of the wantonest, if she be present, to get her thence by-and-by; for a man may lightly guess that she feigned to be so coy to hide that in herself which she doubted others might come to the knowledge of; and such nice fashions are always hateful. Neither ought she again, to show herself free and pleasant, speak words of dishonesty, nor use a certain familiarity without measure or bridle, and fashions to make men believe that of

her that perhaps is not; but being present at such kind of talk, she ought to give the hearing with a little blushing and shamefacedness. Likewise to eschew one vice that I have seen reign in many, namely, to speak and willingly to give ear to such as report ill of other women; for such as in hearing the dishonest behaviors of other woman disclosed, are offended at the matter, and make wise not to credit and, in manner, to think it a wonder that a woman should lead an unclean life, they make proof that, since this fault seemeth unto them so foul a matter, they commit it not. But those that go always harking out the loves of others and disclose them so point by point, and with such joy, it seemeth that they envy the matter, and that their desire is to have all men know it, that the like may not be imputed to them for a trespass, and so they turn it to certain laughters with a kind of gesture, whereby they make men to suspect at the very same instant that they take great contentation at it. And of this ariseth that men, although to their seeming they give diligent ear to it, for the most part conceive an ill opinion of them and have them in very small reputation, and, to their weening, with these behaviors are enticed to attempt them farther. And many times afterward they run so far at rovers that it purchaseth them worthily an ill name, and in conclusion are so little regarded that men pause not for their company, but rather abhor them. And contrarywise, there is no man so shameless and high-minded but beareth a great reverence toward them that be counted good and honest, because that gravity, tempered with knowledge and goodness, is, as it were, a shield against the wanton pride and beastliness of saucy merchants. Wherefore it is seen that one word, a laughter, or a gesture of good

will, how little soever it be, of an honest woman, is more set by of every man than all the toys and wanton gestures of them that so lavishly show small shamefacedness. And where they lead not indeed an unclean life, yet with those wanton countenances, babbling, scornfulness, and such scoffing conditions, they make men to think they do. And forsomuch as words that are not grounded upon some pithy foundation, are vain and childish, the Gentlewoman of the Palace, beside her discretion to understand the condition of him she talketh withal, to entertain him honestly, must needs have a sight in many things, and a judgment in her communication to pick out such as be to purpose for the condition of him she talketh withal and be heedful that she speak not, otherwhile where she would not, words that may offend him. Let her beware of praising herself indiscreetly, or being too tedious, that she make him not weary. Let her not go mingle with pleasant and laughing talk, matters of gravity; nor yet with grave, jests and feat conceits. Let her not foolishly take upon her to know that she knoweth not, but soberly seek to be esteemed for that she knoweth, avoiding, as is said, curiosity in all things. In this manner shall she be endowed with good conditions, and the exercises of the body comely for a woman shall she do with an exceeding good grace, and her talk shall be plenteous and full of wisdom, honesty and pleasantness; and so shall she be not only beloved but reverenced of all men, and perhaps worthy to be compared to this great Courtier, as well for the qualities of the mind as of the body."

When the Lord Giuliano had hitherto spoken, he held his peace, and settled himself as though he had made an end of his talk.

Then said the Lord Gaspar: "No doubt, my Lord Giuliano, you have decked gaily out this Gentlewoman, and made her of an excellent condition; yet meseemeth that you have gone generally enough to work, and named in her certain things so great that I think you are ashamed to expound them, and have rather wished them in her, after the manner of them that sometime wish for things impossible and above nature, that taught them. Therefore would I that you declared unto us a little better, what exercises of the body are meet for a Gentlewoman of the Palace, and in what sort she ought to entertain, and what those many things be which you say she ought to have a sight in; and whether wisdom, nobleness of courage, staidness and those many other virtues that you have spoken of, your meaning is should help her about the overseeing only of her house, children and household—the which nevertheless you will not have her principal profession—or else to entertain and to do those exercises of the body with a good grace; and in good fellowship take heed you put not these silly virtues to so vile an occupation they may be ashamed of it."

The Lord Giuliano laughed and said: "You can not choose, my Lord Gaspar, but still you must utter your ill will against women. But certes methought I had spoken sufficient, and especially before such audience, that I believe none here but understandeth concerning the exercises of the body, that it is not comely for a woman to practise feats of arms, riding, playing at tennis, wrestling and many other that belong to men."

The Lord Cesare Gonzaga replied to this: "In my time I have seen women play at tennis, practise feats of arms, ride, hunt, and do, in a manner, all the exercises beside that a gentleman can do."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "Since I may fashion this woman after my mind, I will not only have her not to practise these manly exercises so sturdy and boisterous, but also even those that are meet for a woman I will have her to do with heedfulness, and with the soft mildness that we have said is comely for her. And therefore in dancing I would not see her use too swift and violent tricks, nor yet in singing or playing upon instruments those hard and often divisions that declare more cunning than sweetness. Likewise the instruments of music which she useth, in mine opinion, ought to be fit for this purpose. Imagine with yourself what an unsightly matter it were to see a woman play upon a tambour or drum, or blow in a flute or trumpet, or any like instrument; and this because the boisterousness of them doth both cover and take away that sweet mildness which setteth so forth every deed that a woman doeth. Therefore when she cometh to dance, or to show any kind of music, she ought to be brought to it with suffering herself somewhat to be prayed, and with a certain bashfulness that may declare the noble shamefacedness that is contrary to headiness. She ought also to frame her garments to this intent, and so to apparel herself that she appear not fond and light. But forsomuch as it is lawful and necessary for women to set more by their beauty than men, and sundry kinds of beauty there are, this woman ought to have a judgment to know what manner garments set her best out, and be most fit for the exercises that she intendeth to undertake at that instant, and with them to array herself. And where she perceiveth in her a sightly and cheerful beauty, she ought to further it with gestures, words and apparel, that all may betoken mirth. In like case another that

feeleth herself of a mild and grave disposition, she ought also to accompany it with fashions of the like sort, to increase that that is the gift of nature. In like manner, where she is somewhat fatter or leaner than reasonable size, or wanner, or browner, to help it with garments, but feigningly as much as she can possible, and, keeping herself cleanly and handsome, show always that she bestoweth no pain nor diligence at all about it. And because the Lord Gaspar doth also ask what these many things be she ought to have a sight in, and how to entertain, and whether the virtues ought to be applied to this entertainment, I say that I will have her to understand that these lords have willed the Courtier to know; and in those exercises that we have said are not comely for her, I will at the least she have that judgment, that men can have of the things which they practise not, and this to have knowledge to praise and make of gentlemen more and less according to their deserts.

"And to make a brief rehearsal in few words of that is already said, I will that this woman have a sight in letters, in music, in drawing or painting, and skilful in dancing, and in devising sports and pastimes, accompanying with that discreet sobermode and with the giving a good opinion of herself, the other principles also that have been taught the Courtier. And thus in conversation, in laughing, in sporting, in jesting, finally in everything she shall be had in very great price, and shall entertain accordingly, both with jests and feat conceits meet for her, every person that cometh in her company. And albeit staidness, nobleness of courage, temperance, strength of mind, wisdom and the other virtues of a man would think belonged not to entertain, yet will I have her endowed with them all, not so much to entertain,

although notwithstanding they may serve thereto also, as to be virtuous; and these virtues to make her such a one that she may deserve to be esteemed, and all her doings framed by them."

"I wonder, then," quoth the Lord Gaspar, smiling, "since you give women both letters, and staidness, and nobleness of courage and temperance, you will not have them also to bear rule in cities, and to make laws, and to lead armies, and men to stand spinning in the kitchen."

The Lord Giuliano answered in like manner, smiling: "Perhaps, too, this were not amiss. Do you not know that Plato, which indeed was not very friendly to women, giveth them the overseeing of cities and all other martial offices he appointeth to men? Think you not there were many to be found that could as well skill in ruling cities and armies as men can? But I have not appointed them these offices, because I fashion a waiting Gentlewoman of the Court, not a queen. I see well you would covertly have up again the slanderous report that the Lord Octaviano gave women yesterday, namely, that they be most imperfect creatures, and not apt to work any virtuous deed, and of very little worthiness, and of no value in respect of men. But surely both he and you should be in very great error if you thought so."

Then said the Lord Gaspar: "I will not have up again matters already past, but you would fain press me to speak some word that might offend these ladies' minds, to make them my foes, as you with flattering them falsely will purchase their good will. But they are so wise above other that they love truth better, although it make not so much for them, than false praises; neither take they it in ill part for a man to say that men are of a more worthiness, and they will not let to

confess that you have spoken great wonders, and appointed to the Gentlewoman of the Palace certain fond, impossible matters, and so many virtues that Socrates and Cato and all the philosophers in the world are nothing to her. For, to tell you the plain truth, I marvel you were not ashamed so much to pass your bounds, where it ought to have sufficed you to make this Gentlewoman of the Palace beautiful, sober, honest, well-spoken, and to have the understanding to entertain without running in slander, with dancing, music, sports, laughing, jests, and the other matters that we see daily used in court; but to go about to give her the knowledge of all things in the world, and to appoint her the virtues that so seldomtimes are seen in men, yea, and in them of old time it is a matter that can neither be held withal nor scantly heard. Now that women are imperfect creatures and consequently of less worthiness than men, and not apt to conceive those virtues that they are, I purpose not to affirm it, because the prowess of these ladies were enough to make me a liar. Yet this I say unto you, that most wise men have left in writing, that Nature, because she is always set and bent to make things most perfect, if she could, would continually bring forth men, and when a woman is born it is a slackness or default of Nature, and contrary to that she would do. As it is also seen in one born blind, lame or with some other impediment, and in trees many fruits that never ripen; even so may a woman be said to be a creature brought forth at a chance and by hap, and that it is so, mark me the works of the man and the woman, and by them make your proof of the perfection of each of them. Howbeit, since these defaults of women are the wit of nature that hath so brought them forth, we ought not for this to hate

them, nor feint in having less respect to them than is meet; but to esteem them above that they are, is error."

The Lord Giuliano looked that the Lord Gaspar would have proceeded still; but when he saw now that he held his peace, he said: "Of the unperfectness of women methink you have alleged a very cold reason, whereunto, albeit mayhap it were not now meet to enter into these subtle points, I answer according to the opinion of him that is of skill, and according to the truth, that substance in whatever thing it be, can not receive into it more or less; for as no stone can be more prefectly a stone than another, as touching the being of a stone; nor one block more perfectly a block than another, no more can one man be more perfectly a man than another, and consequently the male kind shall not be more perfect than the female, as touching his formal substance; for both the one and the other are contained under the species of Homo, and that wherein they differ is an accidental matter and no essential. In case you will then tell me that the man is more perfect than the woman, though not as touching the essential, yet in the accidents, I answer that these accidents must consist either in the body or in the mind; if in the body, because the man is more sturdier, nimbler, lighter, and more abler to endure travail, I say that this is an argument of small perfection; for among men themselves such as abound in these qualities above other are not for them the more esteemed; and in war, where the greatest part of painful labors are and of strength, the stoutest are not for all that the most set by. If in the mind, I say whatever things men can understand, the selfsame can women understand also; and where it pierceth the capacity of the one, it may in likewise pierce the others."

Here, after the Lord Giuliano had made a little stop, he proceeded, smiling: "Do you not know that this principle is held in philosophy, whoso is tender of flesh is apt of mind? Therefore there is no doubt but women, being tenderer of flesh, are also apter of mind, and of a more inclined wit to musings and speculations than men. But, on leaving this apart, because you said that I should make my proof of the perfection of each of them by the works, I say unto you, if you consider the effects of Nature, you shall find that she bringeth women forth as they be, not at a chance, but fitly necessary for the end. For albeit she shapeth them of body not stout, and of a mild mind, with many other qualities contrary to men's, yet do the conditions of each of them stretch unto one self end, concerning the selfsame profit. For even as, through that weak feebleness, women are of a lesser courage, so are they by the very same more wary. Therefore mothers nourish up children, and fathers instruct them, and with manliness provide for it abroad, that they with careful diligence store up in the house, which is no less praise. In case you will then consider the ancient histories (albeit men at all times have been very sparing in writing the praises of women) and them of latter days, you shall find that continually virtue hath reigned as well among women as men; and that such there have been also that have made war and obtained glorious victories, governed realms with great wisdom and justice, and done whatever men have done. As touching sciences, do you not remember you have read of so many that were well seen in philosophy? Other, that have been most excellent in poetry? Other, that have pleaded, and both accused and defended before judges most eloquently? Of handcrafts, long it were

to rehearse, neither is it needful to make any rehearsal thereof.

"If, then, in the essential substance the man is no more perfect than the woman, nor yet in the accidents (and of this, beside reason, the experiences are seen), I wot not wherein this his perfection should consist. And because you said that Nature's intent is always to bring forth things most perfect, and therefore, if she could, would always bring forth a man, and that the bringing of a woman forth is rather a default and slackness of nature than her intent, I answer you that this is full and wholly to be denied; neither can I see why you may say that Nature intendeth not to bring forth women, without whom mankind can not be preserved, whereof Nature herself is more desirous than of anything else, because through the means of this fellowship of male and female she bringeth forth children that restore the received benefits in their childhood to their fathers in their old days, in that they nourish them; afterward they renew them, in begetting themselves also other children, of whom they look in their old age to receive that which being young they bestowed upon their fathers; whereby Nature, as it were, turning her about in a circle, fulfilleth an everlastingness, and in this wise giveth an immortality to mortal men. Since, then, to this the woman is as needful as the man, I can not discern for what cause the one is made by hap more than the other. Truth it is that Nature intendeth always to bring forth matters most perfect, and therefore meaneth to bring forth man in his kind, but not more male than female. Yea, were it so that she always brought forth male, then should it without peradventure be an unperfectness; for, like as of the body and of the soul there aristh a compound more

nobler than his parts, which is man, even so of the fellowship of male and female there ariseth a compound preserving mankind, without which the parts were in decay, and therefore male and female by nature are always together, neither can the one be without the other. Right so he ought not to be called the male that hath not a female (according to the definition of both the one and the other), nor she the female that hath not a male. And for so much as one kind alone betokeneth an imperfection, the divines of old time refer both the one and the other to God; wherefore Orpheus said that Jupiter was both male and female, and it is read in Scripture that God fashioned male and female to his likeness. And the poets many times, speaking of the Gods, mingle the kinds together."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "I would not," quoth he, "we should enter into these subtle points, for these women will not understand us. And albeit I answer you with very good reasons, yet will they believe, or at least make wise to believe, that I am in the wrong, and forthwith will give sentence as they lust. Yet since we are entered into them, only this will I say, that (as you know, it is the opinion of most wise men) the man is likened to the form, the woman to the matter; and therefore as the form is perfecter than the matter, yea it giveth him his being, so is the man much more perfect than the woman. And I remember that I have heard (when it was) that a great philosopher in certain problems of his saith: 'Whence cometh it that naturally the woman always loveth the man that hath been the first to receive of her amorous pleasures? And contrariwise the man hateth the woman that hath been the first to couple in that wise with him?' and adding thereto the

cause, affirmeth it to be this: 'For that in this act the woman receiveth of the man perfection, and the man of the woman imperfection; and therefore every man naturally loveth the thing that maketh him perfect, and hateth that maketh him imperfect.' And beside this a great argument of the perfection of the man, and of the imperfection of the woman is, that generally every woman wisheth she were a man, by a certain provocation of nature, that teacheth her to wish for her perfection."

The Lord Giuliano answered suddenly: "The silly poor creatures wish not to be a man to make them more perfect, but to have liberty, and to be rid of the rule that men have of their own authority challenged over them. And the similitude which you give of the matter and form is not alike in every point; for the woman is indeed not made so perfect by the man as is the matter made by the form, for in truth the matter receiveth his being of the form, and can not stand without it; yea, the more matter forms have, the more imperfection they have withal, and severed from it are most perfect; but the woman receiveth not her being of the man, yea, as she is made perfect by the man, so doth she also make him perfect, whereby both the one and the other come together to beget children, the which thing they can not do any of them by themselves. The cause, then, of the continual love of the woman toward the first that she hath been with, and of the hatred of the man toward the first woman, I will not affirm to be that your philosopher allegeth in his problems, but I impute it to the sureness and stableness of the woman, and wavering of the man, and that not without natural reason; for since the male is naturally hot, by that qual-

ity he taketh lightness, stirring and unsteadfastness, and contrarywise the woman, through cold, quietness, steady weightiness, and more earnest imprintings."

Then the Lady Emilia, turning her to the Lord Giuliano: "For love of God," quoth she, "come once out of these your matters and forms and males and females, and speak so that you may be understood. For we have heard and very well understood the ill that the Lord Octaviano and the Lord Gaspar have spoken of us; but since we understand not now in what sort you stand in our defence, methink therefore that this is a straying from the purpose, and a leaving of the evil imprinting in every man's mind that these our enemies have given of us."

"Give us not this name," answered the Lord Gaspar, "for more meeter it were for the Lord Giuliano which, in giving women false praises, declareth that there are none true for them."

The Lord Giuliano said then: "Doubt you not, Madam, all shall be answered to. But I will not rail upon men so without reason as they have done upon women. And if perchance there were any one here that meant to pen this our talk, I would not that in place where these matters and forms were understood, the arguments and reasons which the Lord Gaspar allegeth against you should be seen unanswered to."

"I wot not, my Lord Giuliano," quoth then the Lord Gaspar, "how in this you can deny that the man is through his natural qualities more perfect than the woman, which of complexion is cold and the man hot, and much more nobler and perfecter is heat than cold, because it is active and forth-bringing, and, as you know, the element poureth down here among us only heat, and

not cold, which pierceth not the works of nature; and therefore, because women are cold of complexion, I think it is the cause of their faintheartedness and fearfulness,"

"Will you still," answered the Lord Giuliano, "enter into subtle points? You shall perceive yourself at every time to come into a greater peck of troubles; and that it is so, hearken to. I grant you that heat in itself is more perfect than cold, but this followeth not in mingled matters and compounded, for, in case it were so, the body that were most hot should be most perfect; which is false, because temperate bodies be most perfect. I do you to wit, moreover, that the woman is of complexion cold in comparison of the man; which for overmuch heat is far wide from temper; but as touching herself, she is temperate, or, at the least, nearer to temper than the man, because she hath that moisture within her of equal portion with the natural heat, which in the man, through overmuch drouth, doth sooner melt and consume away. She hath also such a kind of cold that it resisteth and comforteth the natural heat, and maketh it nearer to temper, and in the man overmuch heat doth soon bring the natural warmth to the last degree, the which, wanting nourishment, consumeth away; and therefore, because men in generation sooner wax dry than women, it happeneth oftentimes that they are of a shorter life. Wherefore this perfection may also be given to women, that, living longer than men, they accomplish it that is the intent of nature more than men. Of the heat that the element poureth down upon us, we talk not now, because it is diverse in signification to it which we entreat upon; the which, since it is nourisher of all things under the sphere of the moon, as well

hot as cold, it can not be contrary to cold. But the fearfulness in women, although it betokeneth an imperfection, yet doth it arise of a praiseworthy cause, namely the subtleness and readiness of the spirits, that convey speedily the shapes to the understanding, and therefore are they soon out of patience for outward matters. Full well shall you see many times some men, that dread neither death nor anything else, yet are they not for all that to be called hardy, because they know not the danger and go forth like hairbrains where they see the way open, and cast no more with themselves, and this proceedeth of a certain grossness of the dulled spirits. Therefore a fond person can not be said to be stouthearted, but very courage indeed cometh of a proper avisement and determined will so to do, and to esteem more a man's honesty and duty than all the perils in the world, and although he see none other way but death, yet to be of so quiet in heart and mind that his senses be not to seek nor amazed, but do their duty in discoursing and bethinking, even as though they were most in quiet. Of this guise and manner we have seen and heard say many great men to be, likewise many women, which both in old time and presently have showed stoutness of courage, and brought matters to pass in the world worthy infinite praise, no less than men have done."

Then said Frisio: "These matters began when the first woman in offending made others to offend also against God, and for inheritance left unto mankind death, afflictions, sorrows, and all other miseries and calamities, that be felt nowadays in the world."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "Since you will also farther your purpose with entering into Scripture, do

you not know that the same offense was in like manner amended by a woman? Which hath profited more than she hindered us, so that the trespass acquitted with so worthy deed is counted most happy. But I purpose not now to tell you how much in dignity all creatures of mankind be inferior to the Virgin our Lady, for mingling holy matters with these our fond reasonings; nor rehearse how many women with infinite steadfastness have suffered cruel death under tyrants for the name of Christ; nor them that with learning in disputation have confuted so many idolaters. And in case you will answer me that this was a miracle and the grace of the Holy Ghost, I say unto you that no virtue deserveth more praise than that which is approved by the testimony of God. Many other also of whom there is no talk, you yourself may look upon, especially in reading Saint Hierom, which setteth out certain of his time with such wonderful praises, that they might suffice the holiest man that can be."

Then said the Lord Gaspar: "Those reasons that have experience against them, in my mind, are not good. And I wish if I should happen to ask you what these great women are or have been, so worthy praise, as the great men whose wives, sisters, or daughters they have been, or that have been occasion of any goodness, or such as have broken them of their errors, I believe it would cumber you shrewdly."

"Surely," answered the Lord Giuliano; "None other thing could cumber me but the multitude of them; and if time served me, I would tell you to this purpose the histories of Octavia, wife to Marcus Antonius and sister to Augustus; of Portia, daughter to Cato and wife to Brutus; of Caia Cecilia, wife to Tarquinius Priscus; of

Cornelia, daughter to Scipio; and of infinite other, which are most known. And not only these of our country, but also barbarians, as that Alexandra, which was wife to Alexander King of the Jews, who after the death of her husband, seeing the people in an uproar, and already run to weapon to slay the two children which he had left behind him, for a revenge of the cruel and strict bondage that their father had always kept them in, she so behaved herself that suddenly she assuaged that just fury, and in a moment with wisdom made those minds favorable to the children, which the father in many years with infinite injuries had made their most enemies."

"Tell us at the least," answered the Lady Emilia, "how she did."

The Lord Giuliano said: "She, perceiving her children in so great a jeopardy, immediately caused Alexander's body to be cast out into the middle of the market-place; afterward, calling unto her the citizens, she said that she knew their minds were set on fire with most just fury against her husband, for the cruel injuries which he wickedly had done them deserved it; and even as when he lived, she did her best always to withdraw him from so wicked a life, so now she was ready to make a trial thereof, and to help them to chastise him even dead, as much as she might, and therefore should take that body of his and give it to be devoured of dogs, and rend it in pieces in the cruellest manner they could imagine. But yet she desired them to take pity upon the innocent children, that could not only be in no fault, but not so much as witting of their father's ill doings. Of such force were these words, that the raging fury once conceived in all that people's minds was suddenly assuaged, and turned into so tender an affection that

not only with one accord they chose those children for their heads and rulers, but also to the dead body they gave a most honorable burial."

Here the Lord Giuliano made a little pause, and afterward he proceeded: "Know you not that Mithridates' wife and sisters showed a far less fear of death than Mithridates himself? And Asdrubal's wife than Asdrubal himself? Know you not that Harmonia, daughter to Hiero the Syracusan, would have died in the burning of her country?"

Then Frisio: "Where obstinacy is bent, no doubt," quoth he, "but otherwhile you shall find some women that will never change purpose, as she that could no longer say 'Scissors' to her husband, with her hands made him a sign."

The Lord Giuliano laughed and said: "Obstinacy that is bent to a virtuous end ought to be called steadfastness, as in Epicharia, a freedwoman of Rome, who, made privy to a great conspiracy against Nero, was of such steadfastness that, being rent with all the most cruel torments that could be invented, never uttered any of the partners. And in the like peril many noble gentlemen and senators fearfully accused brethren, friends, and the dearest and best beloved persons to them in the world. What say you of this other called Leena, in whose honor the Athenians dedicated before the castle gate a lioness of metal without a tongue, to betoken in her the steady virtue of silence? For she, being in like sort made privy to a conspiracy against the tyrants, was not aghast at the death of two great men her friends, and for all she was torn with infinite and most cruel torments, never disclosed any of the conspirators."

Then said the Lady Margarita Gonzaga: "Meseem-

eth that you make too brief rehearsal of these virtuous acts done by women. For although these our enemies have heard them and read them, yet they make wise not to know them, and would fain the memory of them were lost. But in case you will do us to understand them, we will at the least honor them."

Then answered the Lord Giuliano: "With a good will. Now will I tell you of one that did such a deed as I believe the Lord Gaspar himself will confess that very few men do. In Massilia there was in times past an usage, which is thought came out of Greece, and that was, that openly there was poison laid up mingled with cicuta, and it was lawful for him to take it that alleged to the Senate that he ought to be rid of his life for some discommodity that he felt therein, or else for some other just cause, to the intent that whoso had suffered too much adversity or tasted over great prosperity, he might not continue in the one or change the other. In the presence therefore of Sextus Pompeius"—

Here Frisio, not tarrying to have the Lord Giuliano proceed farther: "This, meseemeth," quoth he, "is the beginning of some long tale."

Then the Lord Giuliano turning him to the Lady Margarita said: "See, Frisio will not suffer me to speak. I would have told you now of a woman that, after she had showed the Senate that she ought of right to die, glad and without any fear, took in the presence of Sextus Pompeius the poison with such steadfastness of mind and with such wise and loving exhortation to hers, that Pompeius and all the rest that beheld in a woman such knowledge and steadiness in the trembling passage of death, remained, not without tears, astonished with great wonder."

Then the Lord Gaspar, smiling: "And I again remember," quoth he, "that I have read an oration wherein an unfortunate husband asketh leave of the Senate to die, and allegeth that he hath a just cause, for that he can not abide the continual wearisomeness of his wife's chatting, and had liefer drink of that poison which you say was laid up openly for these respects, than of his wife's scoldings."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "How many silly poor women should have a just cause to ask leave to die for abiding, I will not say the ill words, but the most evil deeds of their husbands? For I know some myself that in this world suffer the pains which are said to be in hell."

"Be there not again, trow you," answered the Lord Gaspar, "many husbands that are so tormented with their wives that every hour they wish for death?"

"And what displeasure," quoth the Lord Giuliano, "can women do their husbands, that is so without remedy, as those are which husbands do their wives? which though not for love, yet for fear, are obedient to their husbands?"

"Sure it is indeed," quoth the Lord Gaspar, "that the little they do well otherwhile cometh of fear, for few there are in the world that secretly in their mind hate not their husbands."

"Nay, clean contrary," answered the Lord Giuliano. "And in case you will remember what you have read, it is to be seen in all histories that always, in a manner, wives love their husbands better than they their wives. When have you ever seen or read that a husband hath showed such a token of love toward his wife as did Camma toward her husband?"

"I wot not," answered the Lord Gaspar, "what she was, nor what token she showed."

"Nor I," quoth Frisio.

The Lord Giuliano answered: "Give ear. And you, my Lady Margarita, look you bear it well away. This Camma was a most beautiful young woman, endowed with such modesty and honest conditions that no less for them than for her beauty she was to be wondered at; and above all other things with all her heart she loved her husband, who had to name Synattus. It happened that another gentleman, of greater authority than Synattus, and, in a manner, head ruler and tyrant of the city where they dwelt, fell in love with this young woman; and after he had long attempted by all ways and means to compass her, and all but lost labor, bethinking himself that the love she bore her husband was the only cause that withstood his desires, he caused this Synattus to be slain. Thus instant upon her afterward continually, other fruit could he never get of her than what he had before. Wherefore, this love daily increasing, he was fully resolved to take her to wife, for all in degree she was much inferior to him. So suit being made to her friends by Sinoris, for so was the lover named, they took in hand to persuade her to be contented with it, declaring that to agree thereto was very profitable, and to refuse it perilous for her and them all. She, after she had a while gainsaid them, at length made answer that she was contented. Her kinsfolk brought this tidings to Sinoris, which, passing measure glad, gave order to have this marriage made out of hand. After they were then both come for this purpose solemnly into the Temple of Diana, Camma had caused to be brought to her a certain sweet drink which she had

made, and so before the image of Diana, in the presence of Sinoris, she drank the one moitie. Afterward with her own hand, for this was the usage in marriages, she gave the remainder to the bridegroom, which drank it clean up. Camma, as soon as she saw her device take effect, kneeled her down very joyful before the image of Diana, and said, 'O Goddess, thou that knowest the bottom of my heart, be a good witness to me, how hardly after my dear husband deceased, I have refrained from killing myself, and what pains I have sustained to endure the grief to live in this bitter life, in which I have felt none other joy or pleasure but the hope of the revenge which I perceive now is come to effect. Therefore with gladness and contentation I go to find out the sweet company of that soul which in life and death I have always more loved than mine own self. And thou, caitiff, that weenedst to have been my husband, instead of a marriage-bed, give order to prepare thee a grave, for of thee do I here make a sacrifice to the shade of Synattus.' Synoris, amazed at these words, and already feeling the operation of the poison within him that put him to great pain, proved many remedies, but all prevailed not. And Camma had fortune so favorable on her side, or whatever else, that before she died she had knowledge that Sinoris was dead. When she heard of that, with very great contentation she laid her upon her bed, with her eyes to heaven, continually calling upon the name of Synattus and saying, 'O most sweet mate, since now I have bestowed for the last tokens upon thy death, both tears and revenge, and perceive not that I have anything yet behind to do for thee here, I flee the world and this without thee a cruel life, which for thy sake only in time past was dear to me. Come therefore

and meet me, O my lord, and embrace as willingly this soul as she willingly cometh to thee.' And speaking these words, and with her arms spread as though she would at that instant have embraced him, died. Say now, Frisio, what think you by this?"

Frisio answered: "Methink you would make these ladies weep. But let us set case this was true, I say unto you that we find no more such women in the world."

The Lord Giuliano said: "Yes, that there be, and that it is so, give ear. In my days there was in Pisa a gentleman whose name was Messer Tommaso, of what house I remember not, for all I heard my father oftentimes tell it, which was his great friend. The Messer Tommaso then, passing upon a day in a little vessel from Pisa toward Sicily about his affairs, was overtaken with certain galleys of Moors, that were on the back of him unawares and before the governors of the vessel had espied them. And for all the men within defended themselves well, yet, because they were but few and the enemies many, the vessel with as many as were on board was taken by the Moors, some hurt, some whole, as fell to their lot; and among them Messer Tommaso, which had played the man and slain with his own hand a brother of one of the captains of those galleys, for which matter the captain, full of wrath, as you may conjecture, by the loss of his brother, would have him for his prisoner, and, beating and buffeting him daily, brought him into Barbary, where in great misery he determined to keep him alive his captive and with much drudgery. All the rest, some one way, some another, within a space were at liberty and returned home, and brought tidings to his wife, called Argentina, and children, of the hard life

and great affliction which Messer Tommaso lived in, and was like without hope to live in continually, unless God wonderfully helped him. The which matter when she and they understood for a certainty, attempting certain other ways for his deliverance, and where he himself was fully resolved to end his life, there happened a careful affection and tender pity so to quicken the wit and courage of a son of his, called Paulo, that he had respect to no kind of danger, and determined either to die or to deliver his father. The which matter he brought to pass, and with such privy conveyance that he was first in Leghorn before it was known in Barbary that he was parted thence. Here hence Messer Tommaso, being arrived in safety, writ to his wife, and did her to wit his setting at liberty, and where he was, and how the next day he hoped to see her. The honest gentlewoman, filled with so great and sudden joy that she should so shortly, as well through the zeal as prowess of her son, see her husband whom she loved so much, where she once surely believed never to have seen him again, after she had read the letter she lifted her eyes to heaven and, calling upon the name of her husband, fell stark dead to the ground; and with no remedy done to her did the departed soul return to the body again. A cruel sight, and enough to temper the wills of men and to withdraw from coveting too fervently superfluous joys."

Then said Frisio, smiling: "What know you whether she died for sorrow or no, understanding her husband was coming home?"

The Lord Giuliano answered: "Because the rest of her life was nothing agreeable thereto. But I ween rather the soul could not tarry the lingering to see him with

the eyes of her body, and therefore forsook it, and, drawn out thence with coveting, fled by and by where, in reading the letter, her thought was fled."

The Lord Gaspar said: "It may be that this woman was overloving, because women in everything cleave always to the extremity, which is ill. And see, for that she was overloving she did ill to herself, to her husband, and to her children, in whom she turned into bitterness the pleasure of that dangerous and desired liberty of his. Therefore you ought not to allege her for one of the women that have been the cause of so great goodness."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "I allege her for one of them that make trial that there are wives which love their husbands. For of such as have been occasion of great profits in the world I could tell you of an infinite number, and rehearse unto you so ancient, that wellnigh a man would judge them fables. And of such as among men have been the inventors of such kind of matters, that they have deserved to be deemed goddesses, as Pallas, Ceres, the Sybils, by whose mouth God hath so oftentimes spoken and discovered to the world matters to come. And such as have taught very great men, as Aspasia, and Diotima, the which also with sacrifice drove off a plague ten years that should have fallen in Athens. I could tell you of Nichostrata, mother to Evander, which showed the Latins their letters. And of another woman also that was mistress to Pindarus Liricus. And of Corinna and Sappho, which were most excellent in poetry; but I will not seek matters so far off, I say unto you that, leaving the rest apart of the greatness of Rome perhaps women were a no less cause than men."

"This," quoth the Lord Gaspar, "were good to understand."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "Hearken to it, then. After Troy was won, many Trojans that in so great a destruction escaped fled some one way, some another; of which, one part, that by many sea-storms were tossed and tumbled, came into Italy in the coast where the Tiber entereth into the sea. So landing to provide for their necessaries, began to go a-foraging about the country. The women that tarried behind in the ships imagined among themselves a profitable device, that should make an end of their perilous and long sea-wandering, and instead of their lost country recover them a new. And after they had laid their heads together in the men's absence, they set fire on the ships, and the first that began this work was called Roma. Yet standing in fear of the men's displeasure that were retiring back again, they went to meet with them, and embracing and kissing in token of good will, some their husbands, some their next a kin, they assuaged that first brunt; afterward they disclosed to them quietly the cause of their witty enterprise. Wherefore the Trojans, on the one side for need, and on the other for being courteously received of the inhabitants, were very well pleased with that the women had done, and there dwelled with the Latins in the place where afterward was Rome. And of this arose the ancient custom among the Romans that women meeting their kinsfolk kissed them. Now you see what a help these women were to give a beginning to Rome. And the Sabine women were a no less help to the increase of it than were the Trojan to the first beginning; for when Romulus had purchased him the general hatred of all his neighbors, for the rapine that he made of their women, he was assailed with war on all sides, the which, for that he

was a valiant man, he soon rid his hands of with victory—only the war with the Sabines excepted, which was very sore, because Titus Tatius, King of the Sabines, was very puissant and wise. Whereupon, after a sore bickering between the Romans and the Sabines, with very great loss on both sides, preparing for a fresh and cruel battle, the Sabine women, clad in black, with their hair scattered and haled, weeping, comfortless, without fear of weapons now bent to give the onset, came into the midst between their fathers and their husbands, beseeching them not to file their hands with the blood of their fathers-in-law and sons-in-law, and in case it were so that they repined at this alliance they should bend their weapons against them; for much better it were for them to die, than to live widows or fatherless and brotherless, and to remember that their children had been begotten of such as had slain their fathers, or they themselves of such as had slain their husbands. With these pitiful wailings, many of them carried in their arms their young babes, of whom some began already to loose their tongue and seemed to call and sport with their grandfathers, unto whom the women, showing forth their nephews and weeping, said: 'Behold your own blood that in such rage you seek to shed with your own hands.' Of such force was in this case the affection and wisdom of the women, that there was not only concluded between the two kings, enemies together, an indissoluble friendship and league, but also (which was a more wonderful matter) the Sabines came to dwell in Rome, and of two peoples was made one, and so did this accord much increase the strength of Rome; thanked be the wise and courageous women, who were so rewarded of Romulus that, parting the people into thirty

bands, he bestowed upon these bands the names of the Sabine women."

Here the Lord Giuliano, pausing a while, and perceiving that the Lord Gaspar spake not: "Trow you not," quoth he, "that these women were occasion of goodness to their men, and helped to the greatness of Rome?"

The Lord Gaspar answered: "No doubt they were worthy much praise. But in case you would as well tell the faults of women as their well doings, you would not have kept hid that in this war of Titus Tatius a woman betrayed Rome, and taught the enemies the way to take the Capitolium, whereby the Romans were well nigh all undone."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "You mention me one ill woman, and I tell you of infinite good. And beside the aforenamed I could apply to my purpose a thousand other examples of the profit done to Rome by women, and tell you why there was once a temple builded to Venus Armata, and another to Venus Calva, and how the Feast of Handmaidens was instituted to Juno, because the handmaidens once delivered Rome from the guiles of the enemies. But, leaving all these things apart, that courageous act for discovering the conspiracy of Catiline, for which Cicero is so praised, had it not chiefly his beginning of a common woman, which for this may be said to have been the occasion of all the good that Cicero boasteth he did the commonwealth of Rome? And in case I had sufficient time, I would, mayhap, show you also that women have oftentimes corrected men of many vices; but I fear me my talk hath already been overlong and cumbrous. Therefore, since I have according to my power fulfilled the charge that these ladies have given me, I mean to give place to him

that shall speak to you much more worthier matters to be heard than I can speak."

Then the Lady Emilia: "Do you not deprive," quoth she, "women of the true praises due unto them. And remember though the Lord Gaspar, and perchance the Lord Octaviano too, hear you with noisomeness, yet do we and these other Lords hearken to you with pleasure."

Notwithstanding, the Lord Giuliano would there have ended, but all the lords began to entreat him to speak. Wherefore he said, laughing: "Lest I should provoke my Lord Gaspar to be my enemy any more than he is, I will but briefly tell you of certain that come into my mind, leaving many that I could recite unto you." Afterward he proceeded: "When Philip, Demetrius' son, was about the City of Scio, and had laid siege to it, he caused to be proclaimed that whatever bondmen would forsake the city and flee to him, he promised them liberty and their masters' wives. The spite of women for this so shameful a proclamation was such that they came to the walls with weapon, and fought so fiercely that in a small time they drove Philip away with shame and loss, which the men could not do. These selfsame women, being with their husbands, fathers and brethren that went into banishment, after they came into Leuconia, did a no less glorious act than this was. For the Erythreans that were there with their federates made war against these Sciotis, which not able to hold out, came to accord with composition to depart only in their doublet and shirt out of the city. The women, hearing of this so shameful a composition, were much offended, reviling them that, leaving their weapons, they would issue out like naked men among their enemies. And when they made answer that it was already so conditioned, they

willed them to carry their shield and spear and leave their clothes, and answer their enemies that this was their array. And in so doing by their women's counsel, they covered a great part of the shame which they could not clean avoid. Likewise when Cyrus had discomfited in battle the army of the Persians, as they ran away, in their fleeing they met with their women without the gates, who, coming to them, said: 'Whither flee you, you cowards? Intend you perhaps to hide you in us from whence you came?' These and such like words the men hearing, and perceiving how much in courage they were inferior to their women, were ashamed of themselves, and returning back again to their enemies fought with them afresh and gave them the overthrow."

When the Lord Giuliano had hitherto spoken, he stayed, and turning him to the Duchess, said: "Now, Madam, you will license me to hold my peace."

The Lord Gaspar answered: "It is time to hold your peace, when you know not what to say more."

The Lord Giuliano said smiling: "You provoke me so that you may chance be occupied all night in hearing the praises of women. And you shall understand of many Spartan women that much rejoiced at the glorious death of their children; and of them that forsook them or slew them with their own hands when they heard they used dastardliness. Again, how the Saguntine women, in the destruction of their country, took weapon in hand against Hannibal's soldiers. And how the army of the Dutchmen vanquished by Marius, their women, not obtaining their suit to live free in Rome in service with the virgin Vestals, killed themselves every one, with their young children. And a thousand more that all ancient histories are full of."

Then said the Lord Gaspar: "Tush! my Lord Giuliano, God wotteth how these matters passed; for those times are so far from us that many lies may be told, and none there is that can reprove them."

The Lord Giuliano said: "In case you will measure in every time the worthiness of women with men's, you shall find that they have never been, nor yet presently, are any whit inferior to men. For, leaving apart those so ancient, if you come to the time when the Goths reigned in Italy, you shall find that there was a queen among them, Amalasunta, that ruled a long while with marvelous wisdom. Afterward Theodolinda, queen of the Longobards, of singular virtue. Theodora, Empress of Greece. And in Italy, among many other, was a most singular lady, the Countess Matilda, whose praises I leave to be told of Count Lodovico, because she was of his house."

"Nay," quoth the Count, "it is your part, for you know it is not meet a man should praise his own."

The Lord Giuliano continued: "And how many famous in times past find you of this most noble house of Montefeltro? How many of the house of Gonzaga; of Este, and of Pio? In case we will then speak of the time present, we shall not need to seek examples far fetched, for we have them in the house. But I will not serve my purpose with them whom we see in presence, lest you should seem for courtesy to grant me it, that in no wise you can deny me. And, to go out of Italy, remember you in our days we have seen Anne, French Queen, a very great lady, no less in virtue than in state; and if in justice and mildness, liberality and holiness of life, you lust to compare her to the Kings Charles and Louis (which had been wife to both of them), you shall

not find her a jot inferior to them. Behold the Lady Margarita, daughter to the Emperor Maximilian, which with great wisdom and justice hitherto hath ruled and still doth rule her State. But, omitting all other, tell me, my Lord Gaspar, what king or what prince hath there been in our days, or yet many years before in Christendom, that deserveth to be compared to Queen Isabella of Spain?"

The Lord Gaspar answered: "King Ferdinand, her husband."

The Lord Giuliano said: "This will I not deny. For since the Queen thought him a worthy husband for her, and loved and observed him so much, it can not be said nay but he deserved to be compared to her. And I think well the reputation he got by her was a no less dowry than the Kingdom of Castile."

"Nay," answered the Lord Gaspar, "I believe rather of many of King Ferdinand's acts Queen Isabella bore the praise."

Then said the Lord Giuliano: "In case the people of Spain, the nobles, private persons, both men and women, poor and rich, be not all agreed together to lie in her praise, there hath not been in our time in the world a more clear example of true goodness, stoutness of courage, wisdom, religion, honesty, courtesy, liberality—to be brief, of all virtue, than Queen Isabella. And where the renown of that Lady in every place and with all nations is very great, they that lived with her and were present at all her doings do all affirm this renown to be sprung of her virtue and deserts. And whoso will weigh her acts, shall soon perceive the truth to be so. For, leaving apart infinite things that make trial of this, and might be told, if it were our purpose, every man

knoweth that in the beginning of her reign she found the greatest part of Castile possessed by great estates; yet recovered she the whole again, so justly and in such sort that they dispossessed themselves, continued in a great good affection, and were willing to make surrender of that they had in possession. It is also a most known thing with what courage and wisdom she always defended her realms from most puissant enemies. And likewise to her alone may be given the honor of the glorious conquest of the kingdom of Grenada, which in so long and sharp a war against stubborn enemies, that fought for their livelihood, for their life, for their law, and to their weening in God's quarrel, declared evermore with counsel and with her own person so much virtue and prowess as perhaps in our time few princes have had the stomach, not only to follow her steps, but to envy her. Beside this, all that knew her report that there was in her such a divine manner of government that a man would have weened that her will only was almost enough to make every man, without any more business, to do that he ought; so that scarcely durst a man, in his own home and in secret, commit anything that he suspected would displease her. And of this a great part was because of the wonderful judgment which she had in knowing and choosing ministers meet for the offices she intended to place them in. And so well could she join the rigor of justice with the mildness of mercy and liberality, that there was no good person in her days that could complain he had been smally rewarded; nor any ill, too sore punished. Wherefore among her people toward her sprang a very great reverence derived of love and fear, which in all men's minds remaineth still so settled that a man would think they looked that she should behold

them from heaven, and there above either praise or dispraise them. And therefore with her name, and with the ways which she ordained, those realms are still ruled, in wise that albeit her life wanteth, yet her authority liveth, like a wheel that, long swinged about with violence, keepeth the same course a good while after of itself, though no man move it any more. Consider you besides this, my Lord Gaspar, that in our time all the great men of Spain and renowned in whatever thing, have been made by Queen Isabella. And the great Captain Gonsalvo Ferdinando was more set by for it than for all his famous victories and excellent and courageous acts, that in peace and war have made him so notable and famous that, in case Fame be not unkind, she will forever spread abroad to the world his immortal praises, and make proof that in our age we have had few kings or great princes that by him have not been surmounted in noble courage, knowledge and all virtue.

"To return therefore to Italy, I say unto you that we have not wanted here also most excellent ladies. For in Naples we have two queens, and not long ago in Naples likewise died the other Queen of Hungary, as excellent a lady as you know any, and to be compared well enough to the mighty and glorious king, Mathew Corvin her husband. Likewise the Duchess Isabel of Aragon, most worthy sister to King Ferdinand of Naples. which, as gold in the fire, so in the storms of fortune hath she showed her virtue and prowess. If you will come into Lombardy, you shall mark the Lady Isabel, Marquess of Mantua, whose most excellent virtues should receive great wrong in speaking of them so temperately as whoso will speak of them in this place must be driven to do. I am sorry, moreover, that you all

knew not the Duchess Beatrice of Milan, her sister, that you might never again wonder at a woman's wit. And the Duchess Eleanor of Aragon, Duchess of Ferrara, and mother to both these ladies whom I have named, was such a one that her most excellent virtues gave a good trial to all the world, that she was not only a worthy daughter to a king, but also deserved to be a queen over a far greater State than all her ancestors possessed. And to tell you of another: How many men know you in the world would abide the bitter strokes of fortune so patiently as Queen Isabel of Naples hath done? Which, for all the loss of her kingdom, banishment, and death of King Frederick her husband, and two sons, and imprisonment of the Duke of Calabria, her eldest, yet still showeth herself a queen, and so beareth out the miserable inconveniences of wretched poverty that every man may see, though she hath changed fortune, yet hath she not altered condition. I omit the naming unto you of infinite other great ladies, and also women of low degree, as many Pisans that, in defense of their country against the Florentines, have declared that noble courage, without any fear of death, that the most invincible courages could do that ever were in the world; wherefore certain of them have been renowned by many noble poets. I could tell you of certain most excellent in letters, in music, in painting, in carvings; but I will not any more go searching out among these examples, which are most known to you all. It sufficeth that if in your minds, you think upon women whom you yourselves know, it shall be no hard matter for you to understand that they are not most commonly in prowess or worthiness inferior to their fathers, brethren, and husbands; and that many have been occasion of goodness

to men, and many times broken them of many of their vices. And where presently there are not found in the world those great queens that go to conquer far countries, and make great buildings, pyramids and cities, as Thomiris, Queen of Scythia, Artemisia, Zenobia, Semiramis, or Cleopatra, no more are there also men like unto Cæsar, Alexander, Scipio, Lucullus, and the other noble Roman captains."

"Say not so," answered Frisio, laughing, "for presently there are more found like Cleopatra or Semiramis than ever there were. And though they have not so many States, powers and riches, yet there wanteth not in them good will to counterfeit them at the least in giving themselves to pleasure."

The Lord Giuliano said: "You will ever, Frisio, pass your bounds. But in case there be found some Cleopatras, there want not for them infinite Sardanapalles, which is much worse."

"Make not this comparison," quoth the Lord Gaspar then. "I believe not that men are so incontinent as women be; and where they were so, yet should it not be worse. For of the incontinence of women arise infinite inconveniences, that do not of men. And therefore, as it was well said yesterday, they have wisely ordained that it may be lawful for them to be out of the way without blame in all other things, that they may apply their force to keep themselves in this one virtue of chastity, without the which children were uncertain, and the bond that knitteth all the world together by blood and by the love that naturally each man hath to that is borne him, should be loosed. Therefore a wanton life in women is less to be borne withal than in men."

Then answered the Lord Giuliano: "Doubtless these

be pretty arguments that you make; I marvel you put them not in writing. But tell me, for what cause is it ordained that a wanton life should not be so shameful a matter in men as in women? Considering if they be by nature more virtuous and of greater prowess, they may also the easier keep themselves in this virtue of continence; and children should be no more nor less certain, for if women were given to wanton living, so men were continent, and consented not to the wantonness of women, they among themselves and without any other help could not bear children. But if you will tell the truth, you yourself know that we have of our own authority claimed a liberty whereby we will have selfsame offenses in us very light and otherwhile worthy praise, and in women not sufficiently to be punished but with a shameful death, or at the least everlasting slander. Therefore, since this opinion hath taken root, methinketh it a meet matter to punish them in like manner sharply that with lies bring up a slander upon women. And I believe that every worthy gentleman is bound to defend always with weapon, where need requireth, the truth, and especially when he knoweth any woman falsely reported to be of little honesty."

"And I," answered the Lord Gaspar, smiling, "do not only affirm it to be every worthy gentleman's duty that you say, but also take it for great courtesy and honesty to cover some offense that by mishap or overmuch love a woman is run into. And thus you may see I am more on women's side, where reason beareth me out, than you be. I deny not that men have taken a little liberty, and that because they know, by the common opinion, that to them wanton living is not so slanderous as to women, which through the weakness of their kind are much more

inclined to appetites than men, and in case they abstain otherwhile from satisfying their lusts they do it for shame, not that will is not most ready in them, and therefore have men laid upon them fear of slander for a bridle, to keep them (in a manner) whether they will or no, in this virtue, without the which (to say the truth) they were little to be set by; for the world hath no profit by women but for getting of children. But the like is not of men, which govern cities, and armies, and do so many other weighty matters, the which (since you will so have it) I will not dispute how women could do; it sufficeth they do it not. And when it was meet for men to make trial of their continence, as well how they passed women in this virtue as in the rest, although you grant it not. And about this will not I rehearse unto you so many histories or fables as you have done. I remit you to the continence only of two most mighty personages, youthful and upon their victory, which is wont to make high men of lowest degree. And the one is, the great Alexander toward the most beautiful women of Darius, his enemy and discomfited. The other, Scipio, unto whom, being twenty-three years of age, and having won by force a city in Spain, there was brought a most beautiful and noble damsel taken among many other. And when Scipio understood that she was affianced to a lord of the country, he did not only abstain from all dishonest act toward her, but undefiled restored her to her husband, and a large gift withal."

Then spake the Lord Cesare which had held his peace a good while: "Judge you in what sort the Lord Gaspar speaketh in the dispraise of women, when these are the matters that he speaketh in their praise. But if the Lord Giuliano give me leave, that I may in his stead answer

him certain few matters, as touching where, in mine opinion, he hath falsely spoken against women, it shall be good for him and me both. For he shall rest him a while, and shall afterward the better go forward to speak of some other perfection of the gentlewoman of the palace, and I shall have a good turn that I have occasion to execute jointly with him this duty of a good knight, which is to defend the truth."

"Marry, I beseech you," answered the Lord Giuliano, "for methink I have always fulfilled, according to my power, that I ought, and this communication now is out of the purpose that I went about."

The Lord Cesare then began: "I will not now speak of the profit that the world hath by women besides the bearing of children, for it is well enough declared how necessary they be, not only to our being, but also to our well being. But I say, my Lord Gaspar, that in case they be as you affirm more inclined to appetites than men, and notwithstanding abstain more than men, which you yourself grant, they are so much the more worthy praise, as their kind is less able to withstand natural appetites. And if you say they do it for shame, I can not see but for one virtue you give them two. For in case shame can do more in them than appetite, and through it refrain from ill doing, I esteem this shame (which in conclusion is nothing else but fear of slander) a most seldom virtue, and reigning in very few men. And if I could, without infinite reproach to men, tell how many of them be drowned in unshamefastness and impudency (which is the vice contrary to this virtue), I should infect these devout ears that hear me. And for most part these kind of injurious persons, both to God and nature, are men well stricken in years, which pro-

fess, some priesthood, some philosophy, some divinity, and rule commonweals with such Cato's gravity in their countenance that it maketh an outward show of all the honesty that is in the world, and always allege womankind to be most incontinent, where they at no time find themselves more aggrieved than at the want of their natural lustiness, that they may satisfy their abominable desires, which still abide in the mind after nature hath taken them from their body, and therefore many times find out ways, where force prevaileth not. But I will not further tell of this. It sufficeth for my purpose you grant that women abstain more from unclean living than men. And sure it is, that they are not kept short with any other bridle than what they put upon themselves. And that it is true, the most part of them that be kept under with overstrict looking to, or beaten of their husbands or fathers, are less chaste than they that have some liberty. But generally a great bridle to women is the zeal of true virtue and the desire of good name, which many that I have known in my days more esteem than their own life. And in case you will tell the truth, every one of us hath seen most noble young men, discreet, wise, of prowess, and well favored, spend many years in loving, sparing for nothing that might entice, tokens, suits, tears; to be short, whatsoever may be imagined, and all but lost labor. And if it might not be told me that my conditions never deserved I should be beloved, I would allege myself for a witness, which more than once through the unchangeable and oversteadfast honesty of a woman was nigh death's door."

The Lord Gaspar answered: "Marvel you not thereat; for women that are sued to always refuse to fulfil

his request that sueth to them, but those that are not sued to, sue to others."

The Lord Cesare said: "I never knew them that have been sued to by women; but many there be that, perceiving they have attempted in vain and spent their time fondly run to this noble revenge, and say that they had plenty of the thing which they did but cast in their mind. And, to their weening, to report ill and to study for inventions how to bring up slanderous tales of some worthy gentlewomen, is a kind of Courtiers. But this kind of persons that knavishly make their vaunt of any woman of price, be it true or false, deserve very sore correction and punishment. And if it be otherwhile bestowed upon them, it can not be said how much they are to be commended that do this office. For in case they tell lies, what mischief can be greater than to take from a worthy woman with guile the thing which she esteemeth more than her life? And no other cause, but that ought to make her renowned with infinite praises. If, again, it be true they say, what pain can suffice so traitorous a person, that rendereth such ingratitude in recompense to a Gentlewoman, which, won with his false flatterings, feigned tears, continual suits, bewailings, crafts, deceits, and perjuries, hath suffered herself to be led to love overmuch, afterward, without respect, hath given herself unheedfully for a prey to so wicked a spirit? But to answer you beside to this wonderful continence of Alexander and Scipio, which you have alleged, I say, that I will not deny but each of them did a deed worthy much praise. Notwithstanding, lest you should say that in rehearsing to you ancient matters, I told you fables, I will allege a woman of our time, of base degree, who notwithstanding showed a far greater

continency than any of these two great estates. I say unto you therefore that I knew once a wellfavored and tender young woman, whose name I tell you not, for giving matter to many lewd persons to report ill, which as soon as they understand a woman to be in love, make an ill descanting upon it. She therefore, beloved of a worthy and fair conditioned young gentleman, was bent with heart and mind to love him. And of this not I alone, unto whom of her own accord she uttered trustfully the whole matter, no otherwise than if I had been —I will not say a brother, but an inward sister of hers —but all that beheld her in company of the beloved young man, were well weeting of her passion. She, thus fervently loving, as a most loving mind could love, continued two years in such modesty that she never made any token to this young man of the love that she bore him, but such as she could not hide from him. At no time she would speak with him, nor receive any letters from him or tokens, where there never passed a day but she was tempted with both the one and the other. And how she longed for it, that wot I well; for if otherwhile she could privily get anything that had been the young man's she was so tender over it that a man would have thought that of it had sprung her life and all her joy. Yet would she never in so long a time content him with other than to behold him and to be seen of him again, and sometime, happening to be at open feasts, dance with him as she did with others. And because there was no great difference in their degree, she and the young man coveted that so great a love might have a lucky end, and be man and wife together. All the men and women in the city desired the same, saving her cruel father, which of a wayward and strange opinion minded

to bestow her upon another, more wealthy. And this was not by the unlucky maiden otherwise gainstood than with most bitter tears. And after this unfortunate marriage was concluded, with great compassion of the people there, and despair of the poor lovers, yet did not this stroke of fortune serve to root up so grounded a love in the heart of each other, but lasted afterward the term of three years, albeit she full wisely dissembled it, and sought every way to cut in sunder those desires which now were past hope. And in this while she followed on still in her set purpose of continence, and perceiving she could not honestly have him she worshipped in the world, she chose not to have him at all, and continued in her wont not to accept messages, tokens, nor yet his looks. And in this resolved determination the silly soul, vanquished with most cruel affliction, and waxed through long passion very faint, at the three years' end, died. Rather would she forego her contentations and pleasures so much longed for, finally her life, than her honor. And yet wanted she no means nor ways to fulfil her desire most secretly, and without peril either of slander or any other loss. And for all that, refrained she from the thing of herself that she so much coveted, and for the which she was so continually attempted by the person whom alone in the world her desire was to please. And to this was she not driven for fear or any other respect, but only for the zeal of true virtue.

"What will you say of another?—that for six months almost nightly lay with a most dear lover of hers, yet in a garden full of most savory fruits, tempted with her own most fervent longing and with the petitions and tears of him that was more dear to her than her own self, refrained from tasting of them. And for all she

was wrapped and tied in the strict chain of those beloved arms, yet never yielded she herself as vanquished, but preserved undefiled the flower of her honesty. Trow you not, my Lord Gaspar, that these be deeds of continency alike to Alexander's? Which most fervently enamored not with the women of Darius, but with his renown and greatness, that pricked him forward with the spurs of glory to abide pains and dangers to make himself immortal, set at naught not only other things, but his own life, to get a name above all men? And do we marvel with such thoughts in his heart that he refrained from a thing which he coveted not greatly? For since he never saw those women before, it is not possible that he should be in love with them at a blush, but rather perhaps abhorred them for Darius' his enemy's sake. And in this case every wanton act of his toward them had been an injury, and not love. And therefore no great matter if Alexander, which no less with nobleness of courage than martial prowess subdued the world, abstained from doing injury to women. The continence in like case of Scipio is doubtless much to be commended, yet, if you consider well, not to be compared to these two women's; for he in like manner also refrained from a thing that he coveted not, being in his enemy's country, a fresh captain, in the beginning of a most weighty enterprise, leaving behind him in his country such expectation of himself, and having besides to give an account to rigorous judges, that oftentimes chastised not only the great but the least offences of all; and among them he wist well he had enemies, knowing also, if he had otherwise done, because she was a noble damsel and espoused to a noble man, he should have purchased him so many enemies and in such sort that many would have

driven off and perchance have set him clean beside his victory. Thus, for so many respects and so weighty, he abstained from a light and hurtful appetite, in showing chastity and a freehearted wellmeaning, the which, as it is written, got him all the hearts of that people; and another army stood him in stead with favor to vanquish men's hearts, which perhaps by force of arms had been invincible."

The Lord Cesare spoke: 'My Lord Gaspar," quoth he, "pardon me if I tell truth. For in conclusion these be the wonderful continencies that men write of themselves, accusing women for incontinent, in whom are daily seen infinite tokens of continence. And certes, if you ponder it aright, there is no fortress so impregnable, nor so well fenced about, that on being assaulted with the thousandth part of the engines and guiles that are practised to conquer the steady mind of a woman, would not yield up at the first assault. How many, trained up by great estates and enriched through them and advanced to great promotion, having in their hands their fortresses, holds and castles, whereupon depended their whole state, their life and all their goods, without shame or care to be named traitors, have disloyally given them to whom they ought not? And would God in our days there were such scarcity of this kind of persons, that we might not have much more ado to find out some one that in this case hath done that he ought, than to name such as have failed therein. See you not so many other that daily wander about to kill men in thickets, and roving by sea, only to rob men's money? How many lawyers falsify testaments? What perjuries make they? How many false evidences, only to get money? How many physicians poison the diseased, only for it? How

many again, for fear of death, do most vile matters? And yet all these so stiff and hard battles doth a tender and delicate young woman gainstand many times, for sundry there have been that have chosen rather to die than to lose their honesty."

Then said the Lord Gaspar: "These, my Lord Cesare, be not, I believe, in the world nowadays."

The Lord Cesare answered: "And I will not allege unto you them of old time. But this I say, that many might be found out, and are daily, that in this case pass not for death. And now it cometh into my mind that when Capua was sacked by the Frenchmen (which is not yet so long since but you may full well bear it in mind), a well favored young gentlewoman of Capua, being led out of her house where she had been taken by a company of Gascoignes, when she came to the river that runneth by Capua, she feigned to pluck on her shoe, insomuch that her leader let her go a little, and she straightway threw herself into the river. What will you say of a poor country wench that not many months ago, at Gazuolo beside Mantua, gone into the field a-leasing with a sister of hers, sore athirst entered into a house to drink water, where the goodman of the house, that was young, seeing her meetly wellfavored and alone, taking her in his arms, first with fair words, afterward with threatenings, attempted to frame her to do his pleasure, and, where she strived still more obstinately, at length with many blows and by force overcame her. She, thus tossed and sobbing, returned into the field to her sister, and for all the instance that she made upon her, would never disclose to her what outrage she received in that house, but still drawing homeward, and showing herself appeased by little and little, and to

speak without disturbance, she gave her certain instructions. Afterward when she came to the Olio, which is the river that runneth by Gazuolo, keeping her somewhat aloof from her sister, that knew not nor imagined that she minded to do, suddenly cast herself into it. Her sister, sorrowful and weeping, followed down by the river's side as fast as she could, which carried her by good pace away, and every time the poor soul appeared above water, her sister threw in to her a cord that she had brought with her to bind the corn withal. And for all the cord came to her hands more than once (for she was yet nigh enough to the bank), the steadfast and resolved girl always refused it and pushed it from her. And thus, shunning all succor that might save her life, in a short space died. She was neither stirred by nobleness of blood, nor by fear of death or slander, but only by the grief of her lost maidenhood. Now by this you may gather how many other women do deeds most worthy memory, since, as a man may say, three days ago this hath made such a trial of her virtue, and is not spoken of, not yet her name known. But had not the death followed at that time of the Bishop of Mantua, uncle to our Duchess, the bank of the Olio in the place where she cast herself in had now been garnished with a very fair sepulcher, for a memory of so glorious a soul, that deserved so much the more clear renown after death as in life it dwelt in an unnoble body."

Here the Lord Cesare took respite awhile, afterward he set forward: "In my days also in Rome there happened a like chance, and it was, that a wellfavored and wellborn young gentlewoman of Rome, being long followed after of one that showed to love her greatly, would never please him with anything, no not so much as a

look. So that this fellow by force of money corrupted a waiting-woman of hers, who, desirous to please him, to finger more money, was in hand with her mistress upon a day, no great holyday, to go visit Saint Sebastian's church. And giving the lover intelligence of the whole, and instructing him what he had to do, led the young gentlewoman into one of the dark caves under ground that whoso go to Saint Sebastian's are wont to visit. And it was the young man first closely hid, which, perceiving himself alone with her whom he loved so much, began every way to exhort her with as fair language as he could, to have compassion upon him and to change her former rigor into love. But when he saw all his prayers could take none effect, he turned him to threatenings. And when they prevailed not, he all to beat her. In the end he was full and wholly bent to have his purpose, if not otherwise, by force, and therein used the help of the naughty woman that had brought her thither. Yet could he never do so much as make her grant to him, but in words and deeds (although her force was but small) always the poor young woman defended herself in what she could possible. So that what for the spite he conceived, when he saw he could not get his will, and what for fear lest the matter should come to her kinsfolk's ear and make him punished for it, this mischievous person, with the aid of the woman that doubted the same, strangled the unlucky young woman, and there left her, and running his way provided for himself for being found out again. The waiting-woman, blinded with her own offense, wist not to flee, and being taken upon certain suspicions, confessed the whole matter, and was therefore punished according to her deserts. The body of the constant and noble

gentlewoman, with great honor, was taken out of the cave and carried to burial within Rome, with a garland of laurel about her head, accompanied with an infinite number of men and women, among which was not one that brought his eyes to his home again without tears. And thus generally of all the people was this rare soul no less bewailed than commended.

"I can no longer keep in silence a word of our Duchess, who, living years in company with her husband, like a widow, hath not only been steadfast in not uttering this to any person in the world, but also when she was persuaded by her own friends to forsake this widowhood, she chose rather to suffer banishment, poverty, and all other kinds of misery, than to agree to that which all other men thought great favor and prosperity of fortune."

And as he still proceeded in talking of this, the Duchess said: "Speak of somewhat else, and no more ado in this matter, for you have enough other things to talk of."

The Lord Cesare followed on: "Full well I know that you will not deny me this, my Lord Gaspar, nor you, Frisio."

"No, doubtless," answered Frisio; "but one maketh no number."

Then said the Lord Cesare: "Truth it is that these so great effects and rare virtues are seen in few women. Yet are they also that resist the battles of love all to be wondered at, and such as otherwhile be overcome deserve much compassion. For surely the provocations of lovers, the crafts that they use, the snares that they lay in wait, are such and so applied that it is too great a wonder that a tender girl should escape them. What

day, what hour, passeth at any time that the young woman thus laid at is not tempted by her lover with money, tokens, and all things that he can imagine may please her? At what time can she ever look out at a window, but she seeth continually the earnest lover pass by—with silence in words, but with a pair of eyes that talk—with a vexed and faint countenance—with those kindled sighs—oftentimes with most abundant tears. When doth she at any time issue out at her doors to church or any other place, but he is always in the face of her?—and at every turning of a lane meeteth her in the teeth, with such heavy passion painted in his eyes that a man would ween that even at that instant he were ready to die? I omit his preciseness in sundry things, inventions, merry conceits, undertaking enterprises, sports, dances, games, maskeries, jousts, tournaments—the which things she knoweth all to be taken in hand for her sake. Again, in the night time she can never awake but she heareth music, or at least that unquiet spirit about the walls of her house casting forth sighs and lamentable voices. If by hap she talketh with one of her waiting-women about her, she (being already corrupted with money) hath straightway in a readiness some pretty token—a letter, a rhyme, or some such matter—to present her in the lover's behalf, and here entering to purpose, maketh her to understand how this silly soul burneth, how he setteth little by his own life to do her service, and how he seeketh nothing of her but honesty, and that only his desire is to speak with her. Here, then, for all hard matters are found out remedies—counterfeit keys, ladders of ropes, ways to cast into sleep, a trifling matter is pointed out, examples are alleged of others that do much worse; so that every mat-

ter is made so easy that she hath no more trouble but to say, 'I am content.' And in case the poor soul maketh resistance but a while, they ply her with such provocations, and find such means, that with continual beating at they break in sunder that is a let to her. And many there be that, perceiving they can not prevail with fair words, fall to threatenings, and say that they will tell their husbands they are that they be not. Other bargain boldly with the fathers, and many times with the husbands, which for money or promotion's sake give their own daughters and wives for a prey against their will. Other seek by enchantments and witchcrafts to take from them the liberty that God hath granted to souls, wherein are seen wonderful conclusions. But in a thousand years I could not repeat all the crafts that men use to frame women to their wills, which be infinite. And beside them which every man of himself findeth out, there hath not also wanted that hath wittily made books and bestowed great study to teach how in this behalf women are to be deceived. Now judge you how from so many nets these simple doves can be safe, tempted with so sweet a bait. And what great matter is it, then, in case a woman, knowing herself so much beloved and worshiped many years together, of a noble and fair conditioned young man, which a thousand times a day hazardeth his life to serve her, and never thinketh upon other but to please her, with the continual beating which the water maketh when it pierceth the most hard marble stone, at length is brought to love him? Is this, think you, so heinous a trespass that the silly poor creature, taken with so many enticements, deserveth not, if the worst should fall, the pardon that many times murderers, thieves, felons and traitors have? Will you have

it that this vice is so incomparably great that, because one woman is found to run into it, all womankind should be clean despised for it, and generally counted void of continence?—not regarding that many are found most invincible that against the continual flickering provocations of love are made of diamonds, and stiff in their infinite steadiness, more than the rocks against the surges of the sea?"

Then the Lord Gaspar, when the Lord Cesare stayed talking, began to make him answer, but the Lord Octaviano, smiling: "Tush, for love of God," quoth he, "grant him the victory; for I know you shall do small good, and methink I see you shall not only make all the women your enemies, but also the more part of the men."

The Lord Gaspar laughed and said: "Nay, the women have rather great cause to thank me. For had I not contraried the Lord Giuliano and the Lord Cesare, they should not have come to the knowledge so many praises as they have given them."

Then said the Lord Cesare: "The praises which my Lord Giuliano and I have given women, and many more beside, were most known, therefore they have been but superfluous. Who woteth not that without women no contentation or delight can be felt in all this life of ours? —which (set them aside) were rude and without all sweetness, and rougher than the life of forest wild beasts? Who knoweth not that women rid our hearts of all vile and dastardly imaginations, vexations, miseries, and the troublesome heaviness that so oftentimes accompanieth them? And in case we will consider the truth, we shall know moreover, as touching the understanding of great matters, that they do not stray our wits, but rather quicken them, and in war make men

past fear and hardy passing measure. And certes it is not possible that, in the heart of man, where once is entered the flame of love, there should at any time reign cowardliness. For he that loveth always coveteth to make himself as lovely as he can, and evermore dreadeth that he take no foil that should make him little set by of whom he desireth to be much set by; and he passeth not to go a thousand times in a day to his death, to declare himself worthy of that love. Therefore whoso could gather an army of lovers, that should fight in presence of the ladies they loved, should subdue the whole world, unless against it on the contrary part there were another army likewise in love. And to abide by, the holding out of Troy ten years against all Greece, proceeded of nothing else but of certain lovers, which, when they intended to issue out abroad to fight, armed themselves in the presence of their ladies; and many times they helped them themselves, and at their setting forth rounded them some certain word that set them on fire and made them more than men. Afterward in fighting they wist well that they were beheld from the walls and towers by the ladies, wherefore they deemed every bold enterprise that they undertook was commended of them, which was the greatest reward to them that they could have in the world. Many there be that hold opinion that the victory of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, against the King of Granada, was chiefly occasioned by women; for the most times when the army of Spain marched to encounter with the enemies, Queen Isabella set forth also with all her damsels. And there were many noble gentlemen that were in love, who, till they came within sight of the enemies, always went communing with their ladies. Afterward, each one taking leave of his, in their presence marched

on to encounter with the enemies, with that fierceness of courage, which love and desire to show their ladies that they were served with valiant men, gave them. Whereupon it befell many times that a very few gentlemen of Spain put to flight and slew an infinite number of Moors, thanked be the courteous and beloved women.

"Therefore I wot not, my Lord Gaspar, what wayward judgment hath led you to dispraise women. Do you not see that of all comely exercises, and which delight the world, the cause is to be referred to no earthly thing but to women? Who learneth to dance featly for other but to please women? Who applieth the sweetness of music for other cause but for this? Who to write in meter, at the least in the mother tongue, but to express the affections caused by women? Judge you how many most noble poems we had been without, both in Greek and Latin, had women been smally regarded of poets? But, leaving all other apart, had it not been a very great loss, in case Messer Francis Petrarch, that writ so divinely his loves in this our tongue, had applied his mind only to Latin matters; as he would have done had not the love of the damsel Laura sometime strayed him from it? I name not unto you the fine wits that are now in the world, and here present, which daily bring forth some noble fruit, and notwithstanding take their ground only of the virtue and beauty of women. See whether Solomon, minding to write mystically very high and heavenly matters, to cover them with a gracious veil, did not feign a fervent dialogue full of the affection of a lover with his woman, seeming to him that he could not find here beneath among us any likeness more meet and agreeing with heavenly matters than the love toward women; and in that wise and manner minded to give us a little of the smack of that divinity which he, both

for his understanding and for the grace above others, had knowledge of. Therefore this needed no disputation. my Lord Gaspar, or at the least so many words in the matter. But you in gainsaying the truth have hindered the understanding of a thousand other pretty matters and necessary for the perfection of the Gentlewoman of the Palace."

The Lord Gaspar answered: "I believe no more can be said. Yet if you suppose that the Lord Giuliano hath not garnished her thoroughly with good conditions, the fault is not in him, but in him that hath so wrought that there are no more virtues in the world; for all that there be he hath bestowed upon her."

The Duchess said smiling "Well, you shall see that the Lord Giuliano will yet find out more beside."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "In good sooth, Madam, meseemeth I have sufficiently spoken. And for my part I am well pleased with this my woman. And in case these Lords will not have her as she is, let them leave her to me."

Here, when all was whist, Sir Federico said: "My Lord Giuliano, to give occasion to say somewhat else, I will but ask you a question, as touching that you have willed to be the principal profession of the Gentlewoman of the Palace. And this it is, that I long to know how she should behave herself in a point that, to my seeming, is most necessary. For albeit the excellent qualities which you have given her contain in them discretion, knowledge, judgment, sleight, sobermode, and so many other virtues, whereby of reason she ought to have the understanding to entertain every man and in all kind of purpose, yet think I, notwithstanding, that above any other thing it is requisite for her to know what belongeth to communication of love. For even as every honest

gentleman, for an instrument to obtain the good will of women, practiseth those noble exercises, precise fashions and good manners which we have named, even so to this purpose applieth he also his words, and not only when he is stirred thereto by some passion, but oftentimes also to do honor to the woman he talketh withal, seeming to him that to declare to love her is a witness that she is worthy of it, and that her beauty and worthiness is such that it enforceth every man to serve her. Therefore would I know how this woman, in such a case, should behave herself uprightly, and how to answer him that loveth her indeed, and how him that maketh false semblant; and whether she ought to dissemble the understanding of it, or be answerable, or shun the matter, and how to handle herself."

Then said the Lord Giuliano: "It were first needful to teach her to know them that make semblant to love, and them that love indeed; afterward, for being answerable in love or no, I believe she ought not to be guided by any other man's will, but by her own self."

Sir Federico said: "Teach you her, then, what are the most certain and surest tokens to discern false love from true, and what trial she shall think sufficient to content herself withal, to be out of doubt of the love shewed her."

The Lord Giuliano answered, smiling: "That wot not I, because men be nowadays so crafty that they make infinite false semblants, and sometime weep, when they have indeed a greater lust to laugh. Therefore they should be sent to the constant Isle under the Arch of faithful lovers. But lest this woman of mine (which is my charge and no man's else, because she is my creature) should run into those errors which I have seen

many other run into, I would say that she should not be light of credence that she is beloved, nor be like unto some that not only make not wise they understand him not that communeth with them of love, be it never so far off, but also at the first word accept all the praises that be given them; or else deny them after such a sort that it is rather an alluring for them to love them they commune withal, than a withdrawing of themselves. Therefore the manner of entertainment in reasoning of love that I will have my Woman of the Palace to use, shall be always to shun believing that whoso talketh of love loveth her any whit the more. And in case the Gentleman be, as many such there are abroad, malapert, and hath small respect to her in his talk, she shall shape him such an answer that he shall plainly understand she is not pleased withal. Again, if he be demure and useth sober fashions and words of love covertly, in such honest manner as I believe the Courtier whom these Lords have fashioned will do, the woman shall make wise not to understand him, and shall draw his words to another sense, seeking always soberly, with the discretion and wisdom that is already said becometh her, to stray from that purpose. But in case the communication be such that she can not feign not to understand it, she shall take the whole, as it were, for a merry device, and make wise that she knoweth it is spoken to her rather to honor her withal than that it is so indeed, debasing her deserts and acknowledging at the gentleman's courtesy the praises which he giveth her; and in this sort she shall be counted discreet, and shall be on the surer hand for being deceived. Thus meseemeth the Gentlewoman of the Palace ought to behave herself in communication of love."

Then Sir Federico. "You debate this matter, my Lord Giuliano," quoth he, "as though it were requisite that all such as speak with women of love should tell lies, and seek to deceive them, the which, in case it were so, I would say your lessons were good. But if this gentleman that entertaineth loveth in very deed, and feeleth the passion that so tormenteth men's hearts sometime, consider you not in what pain, in what calamity and death, you put him, when at no time you grant that the woman shall believe him in anything he saith about this purpose? Shall oaths, tears, and so many other tokens, then, have no force at all? Take heed, my Lord Giuliano, lest a man may think that, besides the natural cruelty which many of these women have in them, you teach them yet more."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "I have spoken, not of him that loveth, but of him that entertaineth with communication of love, wherein one of the necessariest points is, that words be never to seek; and true lovers, as they have a burning heart, so have they a cold tongue, with broken talk and sudden silence. Therefore, mayhap, it were no false principle to say: 'He that loveth much speaketh little.' Howbeit, in this I believe there can be given no certain rule, by reason of the diversity of men's manners. And I wot not what I should say, but that the woman be good and heedful, and always bear in mind that men may with a great deal less danger declare themselves to love than women."

The Lord Gaspar said, laughing: "Why, my Lord Giuliano, will you not that this your so excellent woman shall love again, at the least when she knoweth certainly she is beloved? Considering, if the Courtier were not loved again, it is not likely he would continue in lov-

ing her; and so should she want many favors, and chiefly the homage and reverence wherewithal lovers obey and, in a manner, worship the virtue of the women beloved."

"In this," answered the Lord Giuliano, "I will not counsel her. But I say, pardie, to love, as you now understand, I judge it not meet but for unmarried women. For when this love can not end in matrimony, the woman must needs have always the remorse and pricking that is had of unlawful matters, and she putteth in hazard to stain the renown of honesty that standeth her so much upon."

Then answered the Sir Federico, smiling: "Methink, my Lord Giuliano, this opinion of yours is very sour and crabbed, and I believe you have learned it of some friar preacher, of them that rebuke women in love. And meseemeth you set over hard laws to married women; for many there be that their husbands bear very sore hatred unto without cause, and nip them at the heart, sometime in loving other women, otherwhile in working them all the displeasures they can imagine. And in case it were lawful for such to be divorced and severed from them they be ill coupled withal, perhaps it were not to be allowed that they should love any other than their husband. But when, either through the stars, or their enemies, or through the diversity of complexion, or any other casualty, it befalleth that in bed, which ought to be the nest of agreement and love, the cursed fury of hell soweth the seed of his venom, which afterward bringeth forth disdain, suspicion and the pricking thorns of hatred, that tormenteth those unlucky souls bound cruelly together in the fast linked chain that can not be broken but by death, why will you not have it lawful for this

woman to seek some easement for so hard a scourge, and give unto another that which her husband not only regardeth not but rather clean abhorreth? I hold well, that such as have meet husbands and be beloved of them, ought not to do them injury; but the other, in not loving him that loveth them, do themselves an injury."

"Nay, they do themselves injury in loving other beside their husbands," answered the Lord Giuliano. "Yet since not loving is not many times in our will, if this mishap chance to the Woman of the Palace, that the hatred of her husband or the love of another bendeth her to love, I will have her to grant her lover nothing else but the mind, nor at any time to make him any certain token of love, neither in word nor gesture, nor any other way that he may be fully assured of it."

Then said Messer Roberto of Bari, smiling: "I appeal, my Lord Giuliano, from this judgment of yours, and I believe I shall have many fellows. But since you will teach this currishness (that I may term it so) to married women, will you also have the unmarried to be so cruel and discourteous, and not please their lovers, at the least in somewhat?"

"In case my Woman of the Palace," answered the Lord Giuliano, "be not married, minding to love, I will have her to love one whom she may marry, neither will I think it an offense if she show him some token of love. In which matter I will teach her one general rule in few words, and that is, that she show him whom she loveth all tokens of love, except such as may bring into the lover's mind a hope to obtain of her any dishonest matter. And to this she must have a great respect, because it is an error that infinite women run into, which ordinarily covet nothing so much as to be beautiful; and,

because to have many lovers they suppose is a testimony of their beauty, they do their best to win them as many as they can. Therefore oftentimes they run at rovers in behaviors of small modesty, and, leaving the temperate sobermode that is so sightly in them, use certain wanton countenances, with doubtful words and gestures full of unshamefastness, holding opinion that men mark them and give ear to them willingly for it, and with these fashions make themselves beloved, which is false; because the signs and tokens that be made them spring of an appetite moved by an opinion of easiness, not of love. Therefore will not I that my Woman of the Palace with dishonest behaviors should appear as though she would offer herself unto whoso will have her, and allure what she can the eyes and affections of whoso beholdeth her; but with her deserts and virtuous conditions, with amiableness and grace, drive into the mind of whoso seeth her the very love that is due unto everything worthy to be loved, and the respect that always taketh away hope from whoso mindeth any dishonest matter. He then that shall be beloved of such a woman, ought of reason to hold himself contented with every little token, and more to esteem a look of hers with affection of love, than to be altogether master of another.

"And to such a woman I wot not what to add more, but that she be beloved of so excellent a Courtier as these Lords have fashioned, and she likewise to love him, that both the one and the other may have full and wholly his perfection."

After the Lord Giuliano had thus spoken, he held his peace, when the Lord Gaspar, laughing: "Now," quoth he, "you can not complain that the Lord Giuliano hath not fashioned this Woman of the Palace most excellent.

And if, pardie, there be any such to be found, I say that she deserveth well to be esteemed equal with the Courtier."

The Lady Emilia answered: "I will at all times be bound to find her, when you find the Courtier."

Messer Roberto said then: "Doubtless it can not be said, nay, but the Lord Giuliano's woman which he hath fashioned is most perfect. Yet in these her last properties, as touching love, meseemeth notwithstanding that he hath made her somewhat over crabbed, and especially where he will have her in words, gestures and countenance to take clean away all hope from the lover, and settle him as nigh as she can in despair. For, as all men know, the desires of man stretch not to such kind of matters, whereof there is no hope to be had. And although at times some women there have been that perhaps bear themselves lofty of their beauty and worthiness, the first word they have said to them that communed with them of love hath been, that they should never look to come by anything of them that liked them; yet in countenance and dalliance together they have afterward been more favorable to them, so that with their gentle deeds they have tempered in part their proud words. But if this woman, both in words, deeds and behaviors take hope quite away, I believe our Courtier, if he be wise, will never love her, and so shall she have this imperfection, that she shall be without a lover."

Then the Lord Giuliano: "I will not," quoth he, "have my Woman of the Palace to take away the hope of everything, but of dishonest matters—that which, in case the Courtier be so courteous and discreet as these Lords have fashioned him, he will not only not hope for, but not once motion. For if beauty, manners, wit, goodness,

knowledge, sobermode, and so many other virtuous conditions which we have given the woman, be the cause of the Courtier's love toward her, the end also of this love must needs be virtuous; and if nobleness of birth, skilfulness in martial feats, in letters, in music, gentleness, being both in speech and in behavior endowed with so many graces, be the means wherewithal the Courtier compasseth the woman's love, the end of that love must needs be of the same condition that the means are by the which he cometh to it. Besides that, as there be in the world sundry kinds of beauty, so also are there sundry desires of men; and therefore it is seen that many, perceiving a woman of so grave a beauty that going, standing, jesting, dallying, and doing what she lusteth, so tempereth all her gestures that it driveth a certain reverence into whoso beholdeth her, are aghast and afraid to serve her, and, rather drawn with hope, love those garish and enticeful women, so delicate and tender, that in their words, gestures, and countenance declare a certain passion, somewhat feeble, that promiseth to be easily brought and turned into love. Some, to be sure, from deceits, love certain other so lavish both of their eyes, words and gestures, that they do whatever first cometh to mind, with a certain plainness that hideth not their thoughts. There want not also many other noble courages, that, seeming to them that virtue consisteth about hard matters (for it is over-sweet a victory to overcome that seemeth to another impregnable), are soon bent to love the beauties of those women that in their eyes, words and gestures declare a more churlish gravity than the rest, for making a trial that their prowess can enforce an obstinate mind, and bend also stubborn wills and rebels against love to love.

Therefore such as have so great alliance in themselves, because they reckon themselves sure from deceit, love also willingly certain women, that with a sharpness of wit, and with art, it seemeth in their beauty that they hide a thousand crafts. Or else some other, that have accompanied with beauty a certain scornful fashion in few words little laughing, after a sort as though, in a manner, they smally regarded whosoever beholdeth or serveth them. Again, there are found certain other, that vouchsafe not to love but women that in their countenance, in their speech, and in all their gestures have about them all handsomeness, all fair conditions, all knowledge, and all graces heaped together, like one flower made of all the excellencies in the world. Therefore, in case my Woman of the Palace have scarcity of these loves proceeding of an ill hope, she shall not for this be without a lover; because she shall not want them that shall be provoked through her deserts and through the affiance of that prowess in themselves, whereby they shall know themselves worthy to be beloved of her.

Messer Roberto still spake against him; but the Duchess told him that he was in the wrong, confirming the Lord Giuliano's opinion. After that she added: "We have no cause to complain of the Lord Giuliano, for doubtless I think that the Woman of the Palace whom he hath fashioned may be compared to the Courtier, and that with some advantage; for he hath taught her to love, which these Lords have not done their Courtier."

Then spake Unico Aretino: "It is meet to teach women to love, because I never saw any that could do it; for almost continually all of them accompany their beauty with cruelty and unkindness toward such as

serve them most faithfully, and which for nobleness of birth, honesty and virtue deserved a reward for their good will; and yet many times gave themselves for a prey to most blockish and cowardly men and very assheads, and which not only love them not, but abhor them. Therefore, to shun these so foul oversights, perhaps it had been well done first to have taught them to make a choice of him that should deserve to be beloved, and afterward to love him. The which is not necessary in men, for they know it too well of themselves. And I myself can be a good witness of it, because love was never taught me but by the divine beauty and most divine manners of a lady, so that it was not in my will not to worship her; and therefore needed I therein no art nor teacher at all. And I believe the like happeneth to as many as love truly. Therefore the Courtier hath more need to be taught to make him beloved than to love."

Then said the Lady Emilia: "Do you now reason of this then, Messer Unico."

Unico answered: "Methink reason would that the good will of women should be gotten in serving and pleasing them. But it wherein they reckon themselves served and pleased must be learned of women themselves, which oftentimes covet such strange matters that there is no man that would imagine them, and otherwhile they themselves wot not what they should long for; therefore it were good you, Madam, that are a woman, and of right ought to know what pleaseth women, should take this pain, to do the world so great a profit."

Then said the Lady Emilia: "Forsomuch as you are generally most acceptable to women, it is a good likelihood that you know all the ways how their good will

is to be gotten. Therefore it is, pardie, meet for you to teach it."

"Madam," answered Unico, "I can give a lover no profitabler advice than to procure that you bear no stroke with the women whose good will he seeketh. For the small qualities which yet seemed to the world sometime to be in me, with as faithful a love as ever was, were not of such force to make me beloved, as you to make me hated."

Then answered the Lady Emilia: "God save me, Messer Unico, for once thinking, and much more for working, anything that should make you be hated. For, besides that I should do that I ought not, I should be thought of a slender judgment to attempt a matter unpossible. But since you provoke me in this sort to speak of that pleaseth women, I will speak of it, and if it displease you, lay the fault in yourself. I judge, therefore, that whoso intendeth to be beloved ought to love and to be lovely; and these two points are enough to obtain the good will of women. Now to answer to that which you lay to my charge, I say that every man knoweth and seeth that you are most lovely. Marry, whether you love so faithfully as you say you do, I am very doubtful, and perhaps others too. For your being over lovely hath been the cause that you have been beloved of many women; and great rivers divided into many arms become small brooks; so love likewise, scattered into more than one body, hath small force. But these your continual complaints and accusing of the women whom you have served of unkindness (which is not likely considering so many deserts of yours) is a certain kind of discretion to cloak the favors, contentations and pleasures which you have received in love, and an assurance for

the women that love you and that have given themselves for a prey to you, that you will not disclose them. And therefore are they also well pleased that you should thus openly show false loves to others, to cloak their true. Wherefore, if haply those women that you now make wise to love, are not so light of belief as you would they were, it happeneth because this your art in love beginneth to be discovered, and not because I make you to be hated."

Then said Messer Unico: "I intend not to attempt to confute your words, because meseemeth it is as well my destiny not to be believed in truth, as it is yours to be believed in untruth."

"Say hardly, Messer Unico," answered the Lady Emilia, "that you love not so as you would have believed you did. For if you did love, all your desires should be to please the woman beloved, and to will the selfsame things that she willeth, for this is the law of love. But your complaining so much of her, betokeneth some deceit, as I have said, or else it is a sign that you will that which she willeth not."

"Nay," quoth Messer Unico, "there is no doubt but I will that which she willeth, which is a sign I love her; but it grieveth me because she willeth not that which I will, which is a token she loveth not me, according to the very same law that you have alleged."

The Lady Emilia answered: "He that taketh in hand to love, must please and apply himself full and wholly to the appetites of the wight beloved, and according to them frame his own; and make his own desires servants; and his very soul, like an obedient handmaiden; nor at any time to think upon other, but to change his, if it were possible, into the beloved wight's, and reckon this

his chief joy and happiness; for so always do they that love truly."

"My chief happiness were jump," answered Messer Unico, "if one will alone ruled her soul and mine both."

"It lieth in you to do it," answered the Lady Emilia.

Then spake Messer Bernardo, interrupting them: "Doubtless whoso loveth truly, directeth all his thoughts, without other men's teaching, to serve and please the woman beloved. But because these services of love are not otherwhile well known, I believe that, besides loving and serving, it is necessary also to make some other show of this love so manifest that the woman may not dissemble to know that she is beloved; yet with such modesty that it may not appear that he beareth her little reverence. And therefore you, Madam, that have begun to declare how the soul of the lover ought to be an obedient handmaiden to the beloved, teach us withal, I beseech you, this secret matter, which methink is most needful."

The Lord Cesare laughed, and said: "If the lover be so bashful that he is ashamed to tell it her, let him write it to her."

To this the Lady Emilia said: "Nay, if he be so discreet as is meet, before he maketh the woman to understand it, he ought to be out of doubt to offend her."

Then said the Lord Gaspar: "All women have a delight to be sued to in love, although they were minded to deny the suit."

The Lord Giuliano said: "You are much deceived. For I would not counsel the Courtier at any time to use this way, except he were sure not to have a repulse."

"What should he then do?" quoth the Lord Gaspar.

The Lord Giuliano answered: "In case you will needs

write or speak to her, do it with such sobermode, and so warily, that the words may first attempt the mind, and so doubtfully touch her intent and will that they may leave her a way and a certain issue to feign the understanding that those words contain love; to the intent if he find any danger, he may draw back and make wise to have spoken or written it to another end, to enjoy these familiar cherishings and dalliances, with assurance that oftentimes women show to such as should take them for friendship, afterward deny them as soon as they perceive they are taken for tokens of love. Wherefore such as be too rash and venture so saucily with certain furies and plunges, oftentimes lose them, and worthily; for it displeaseth always every honest gentlewoman to be little regarded of whoso without respect seeketh for love at her before he hath served her. Therefore, in my mind, the way which the Courtier ought to take, to make his love known to the woman, methink should be to declare them in signs and tokens more than in words. For assuredly there is otherwhile a greater affection of love perceived in a sigh, in a respect, in a fear, than in a thousand words. Afterward to make the eyes the trusty messengers, that may carry the ambassades of the heart; because they oftentimes declare with a more force what passion there is inwardly, than can the tongue, or letters, or messages, so that they not only disclose the thoughts, but also many times kindle love in the heart of the person beloved. For those lively spirits that issue out at the eyes, because they are engendered nigh the heart, entering in like case into the eyes that they are leveled at, like a shaft to the point, naturally pierce to the heart as to their resting-place, and there are at tryst with those other spirits; and with the most subtle and

fine nature of blood which they carry with them they infect the blood about the heart, where they are come to, and warm it, and make it like unto themselves, and apt to receive the imprinting of the image which they have carried away with them. Wherefore, by little and little coming and going the way through the eyes to the heart, and bringing back with them the tender and striking iron of beauty and grace, these messengers kindle with the puffing of desire the fire that so burneth, and never ceaseth consuming, for always they bring some matter of hope to nourish it.

"Therefore it may full well be said that the eyes are a guide in love, especially if they have a good grace and sweetness in them, black, of a clear and sightly blackness, or else gray, merry and laughing, and so comely and piercing in beholding as some in which a man thinketh verily that the ways that give an issue to the spirits are so deep that by them he may see as far as the heart. The eyes therefore lie lurking, like soldiers in war, lying in wait in bushment; and if the form of all the body be wellfavored and of good proportion, it draweth unto it and allureth whoso beholdeth it afar off until he come nigh, and as soon as he is at hand, the eyes shoot, and like sorcerers bewitch, and especially when by a right line they send their glistering beams into the eyes of the wight beloved at the time when they do the like, because the spirits meet together, and in that sweet encounter the one taketh the other's nature and quality; as it is seen in a sore eye that, beholding steadily a sound one, giveth him his disease. Therefore methink our Courtier may in this wise open a great parcel of the love to his woman. Truth it is that in case the eyes be not governed with art, they discover many times the amorous

desires more unto whom a man would least; for through them, in a manner, visibly shine forth those burning passions which the lover, minding to disclose only to the wight beloved, openeth them many times also unto whom he would most soonest hide them from. Therefore he that hath not lost the bridle of reason, handleth himself heedfully, and observeth the times and places, and, when it needeth, refraineth from so steadfast beholding for all it be a most savory food, because an open love is too hard a matter."

Count Lodovico answered: "Yet otherwhile to be open it hurteth not; because in this case many times men suppose that those loves tend not to the end which every lover coveteth, when they see little heed is taken to hide them, and pass not whether they be known or no; and therefore with denial a man challengeth him a certain libetry to talk openly and to stand without suspicion with the wight beloved; which is not so in them that seek to be secret, because it appeareth that they stand in hope of and are nigh some great reward, which they would not have other man to know. I have also seen a most fervent love spring in the heart of a woman toward one that seemed at the first not to bear him the least affection in the world, only for that she heard say that the opinion of many was, that they loved together. And the cause of this, I believe, was, that so general a judgment seemed a sufficient witness that he was worthy of her love. And it seemed, in a manner, that report brought the ambassade on the lover's behalf much more truer and worthier to be believed than he himself could have done with letters, or words, or any other person for him; therefore sometime this common voice not only hurteth not, but farthereth a man's purpose."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "Loves that have report for their messenger are very perilous to make a man pointed to with a finger, and wherefore whoever intendeth to walk this race warily, needs must he make countenance to have a great deal less fire in his stomach than indeed he hath, and content himself with that which he thinketh a trifle, and dissemble his desires, jealousies, afflictions and pleasures, and many times laugh with mouth when the heart weepeth, and show himself lavish of that he is most covetous of; and these things are so hard to be done that, in a manner, they are unpossible. Therefore if our Courtier would follow my counsel, I would exhort him to keep his loves secret."

Then said Messer Bernardo: "You must then teach it him, and methink it is much to purpose; for, besides privy signs that some make otherwhile so closely, that, in a manner, without any gesture, the person whom they covet in their countenance and eyes read what they have in the heart, I have sometime heard between two lovers a long and large discourse of love, whereof yet the standers-by could not plainly understand any particular point, nor be out of doubt that it was of love, such was the discretion and heedfulness of the talker. For without making any manner show that they were not willing to be heard they rounded privily the words only that were most to purpose, and all the rest they spake aloud, which might be applied to divers meanings."

Then spake Sir Federico: "To reason thus in piecemeal of these rules of secretness, were a taking of an infinite matter in hand; therefore would I that we spake somewhat rather how the lover should keep and maintain his lady's good will, which methink is much more necessary."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "I believe the means that serve him to compass it serve him also to keep it, and all this consisteth in pleasing the woman beloved, without offending her at any time. Therefore it were a hard matter to give any certain rule, because whoso is not discreet, infinite ways committeth oversights, which otherwhile seem matters of nothing, and yet offend they much the woman's mind. And this happeneth, more than to others, to such as be masters with passion; as some that, whensoever they have opportunity to speak with the woman they love, lament and bewail so bitterly, and covet many times things so unpossible, that through this unreasonableness they are loathed of them. Other, if they be pricked with any jealousy, stomach the matter so grievously that without stop they burst out in railing upon him they suspect, and otherwhile it is without trespass either of him or yet of the woman, and will not have her speak with him, nor once turn her eyes on that side where he is. And with these fashions many times they do not only offend the woman, but also they are the cause that she bendeth herself to love the other. Because the fear that a lover declareth to have otherwhile lest his lady forsake him for the other, betokeneth that he acknowledgeth himself inferior in deserts and prowess to the other, and with this opinion the woman is moved to love him. And perceiving that to put him out of favor he reporteth ill of him, although it be true, yet she believeth it not, and notwithstanding loveth him the more."

Then said the Lord Cesare: "I confess that I am not so wise that I could refrain speaking ill of my fellow lover, except you could teach me some other better way to despatch him."

The Lord Giuliano answered, smiling: "It is said in a proverb, 'When a man's enemy is in the water up to the middle, let him reach him his hand, and help him from the danger; but when he is up to the chin, set his foot on his head and drown him out of hand.' Therefore certain there be that play so with their fellow lovers, and until they have a sure mean to despatch them, go dissembling the matter, and rather show themselves friends than otherwise. Afterward, when occasion serveth them so fitly that they know they may overthrow them with a sure riddance, reporting all evil of them, be it true or false, they do it without sparing, with art, deceit, and all ways that they can imagine. But because I would not like that our Courtier should at any time use any deceit, I would have him to withdraw the good will of his mistress from his fellow lover with none other art but with loving, with serving, and with being virtuous, of prowess, discreet, sober—in conclusion, with deserving more than he, and with being in everything heedful and wise, refraining from certain lewd follies into the which oftentimes many ignorant run, and by sundry ways. For in time past I have known some that in writing and speaking to women used evermore the words of Poliphilus, and ruffled so in their subtle points of rhetoric that the women were out of conceit with their own selves, and reckoned themselves most ignorant, and an hour seemed a thousand years to them to end that talk and to be rid of them. Other brag and boast too beyond all measure. Other speak things many times that redound to the blame and damage of themselves, as some that I am wont to laugh at, which make profession to be lovers, and otherwhile say in the company of women: 'I never found woman that ever loved me,' and are not weeting

that the hearers by and by judge that it can arise of none other cause, but that they deserve neither to be beloved, nor yet so much as the water they drink, and count them assheads, and would not love them for all the good in the world, seeming to them that, in case they should love them, they were less worth than all the rest that have not loved them. Other, to purchase hatred to some fellow lover of theirs, are so fond that in like manner in the company of women they say: 'Such a one is the luckiest man in the world; for once, he is neither well favored, nor sober, nor of prowess, neither can he do or say more than other men, and yet all women love him, and run after him,' and thus uttering the spite they bear him for this good luck, although neither in countenance nor deeds he appeareth lovely, yet make they them believe that he hath some hid matter in him, for the which he deserveth the love of so many women, wherefore the women that hear them talk of him in this wise, they also upon this belief are moved to love him much more."

Then Count Lodovico laughed, and said: "I assure you our Courtier, if he be discreet, will never use this blockishness to get him the good will of women."

The Lord Cesare Gonzaga answered: "Nor yet another that a gentleman of reputation used in my days, who shall be nameless for the honor of men."

The Duchess answered: "Tell us, at the least, what he did."

The Lord Cesare said: "This man, being beloved of a great lady, at her request came privily to the town where she lay. And after he had seen her and communed with her, as long as they thought meet and had time and leisure thereto, at his leavetaking with many bitter

tears and sighs, in witness of the extreme grief he felt for this departing, he required her to be always mindful of him. And afterward he added withal, that she would discharge his inn; for since he came thither at her request, he thought meet that he should not stand to the charges of his being there himself."

Then began all the ladies to laugh, and said that he was most unworthy of the name of a gentleman; and many were ashamed with the selfsame shame that he himself should worthily have felt, if at any time he had gotten so much understanding that he might have perceived so shameful an oversight.

Then turned the Lord Gaspar to the Lord Cesare and said: "Better had it been to omit the rehearsal of this matter for the honor of women, than the naming of him for the honor of men. For you may well imagine what a judgment that great lady had in loving so unreasonable a creature. And perhaps, too, of many that served her, she chose him for the most discreetest, leaving behind and showing ill will unto them that he was not worthy to wait upon."

Count Lodovico laughed, and said: "Who wotteth whether he was discreet in other things or no, and was out of the way only about inns? But many times for overmuch love men commit great follies. And, if you will tell the truth, perhaps it hath been your chance to commit more than one."

The Lord Cesare answered, smiling: "Of good fellowship, let us not discover our own oversights."

"Yet we must discover them," answered the Lord Gaspar, "that we may know how to amend them." Then he proceedeth: "Now that the Courtier knoweth how to win and keep the good will of his lady, and take it

from his fellow lover, you, my Lord Giuliano, are debtor to teach her to keep her loves secret."

The Lord Giuliano answered: "Methink I have sufficiently spoken, therefore get you now another to talk of this secret matter."

Then Messer Bernardo and all the rest began afresh to be in hand with him instantly, and the Lord Giuliano said: "You will tempt me. You are all the sort of you too great clerks in love. Yet if you desire to know further, go and read Ovid."

"And how," quoth Messer Bernardo, "shall I hope that his lessons are anything worth in love, when he counseleth and saith that it is very good for a man in the company of his mistress to feign the drunkard? See what a goodly way it is to get good will withal. And he allegeth, for a pretty device to make a woman understand that he is in love with her, being at a banquet, to dip his finger in wine and write it upon the table."

The Lord Giuliano said, smiling: "In those days it was no fault."

"And therefore," quoth Messer Bernardo, "seeing so sluttish a matter was not disallowed of men in those days, it is to be thought that they had not so courtly behaviors to serve women in love as we have. But let us not omit our first purpose to teach to keep love secret."

Then said the Lord Giuliano: "In mine advice, to keep love secret, the causes are to be shunned that utter it, which are many, yet one principal, namely, to be oversecret, and to put no person in trust. Because every lover coveteth to make his passion known to the beloved, and, being alone, he is driven to make many more signs and more evident than if he were aided by some loving and faithful friend. For the signs that the lover him-

self maketh, give a far greater suspicion than those that he maketh by them that go in message between. And forsomuch as men naturally are greedy to understand, as soon as a stranger beginneth to suspect the matter, he so applieth it that he cometh to the knowledge of the truth, and when he once knoweth it he pauseth not for disclosing it, yea sometime he hath a delight to do it; which happeneth not of a friend, who, besides that he is a help to him with favor and counsel, doth many time remedy the oversights committed by the blind lover, and always procureth secretness, and preventeth many matters which he himself can not foresee, besides the great comfort that he feeleth, when he may utter his passions and griefs to a hearty friend, and the partening of them likewise increaseth his contentations."

Then said the Lord Gaspar: "There is another cause that discovereth loves much more than this."

"What is that?" answered the Lord Giuliano.

The Lord Gaspar said: "Vain greediness joined with the fondness and cruelty of women, which, as you yourself have said, procure as much as they can to get them a great number of lovers, and, if it were possible, they would have them all to burn and become ashes, and after death to return to life, to die again. And though they love withal, yet rejoice they at the torment of lovers, because they suppose that grief, afflictions and the calling every hour for death, is a true witness that they are beloved, and that with their beauty they can make men miserable and happy, and give them life and death, as pleaseth them. Wherefore they feed upon this only food, and are so greedy over it that for wanting it they never thoroughly content lovers, nor yet put them out of hope, but, to keep them still in afflictions and in de-

sire, they use a certain lofty sourness of threatenings mingled with hope, and would have them to esteem a word, a countenance or a beck of theirs for a chief bliss. And to make men count them chaste and honest, as well others as their lovers, they find means that these sharp and discourteous manners of theirs may be in open sight, for every man to think that they will much worse handle the unworthy, since they handle them so that deserve to be beloved. And under this belief, thinking themselves with this craft safe from slander, oftentimes they lie nightly with most vile men and whom they scarcely know. So that to rejoice at the calamity and continual complaints of some worthy gentleman, and beloved of them, they bar themselves from those pleasures which perhaps with some excuse they might come by, and are the cause that the poor lover by very debating of the matter is driven to use ways by the which the thing cometh to light that with all diligence should have been kept most secret.

"Certain other there are, which, if with deceit they can bring many in belief that they are beloved of them, nourish among them jealousies with cherishing and making of the one in the other's presence. And when they see that he also whom they love best is now assured and out of doubt that he is beloved, through the signs and tokens that be made him, many times with doubtful words and feigned disdains they put him in an uncertainty and nip him at the very heart, making wise not to pass for him, and to give themselves full and wholly to the other. Whereupon arise malice, enmities, and infinite occasions of strife and utter confusion. For needs must a man show in that case the extreme passion which he feeleth, although it redound to the blame and slander of the

woman. Other, not satisfied with this only tournament of jealousy, after the lover hath declared all his tokens of love and faithful service, and they received the same with some sign to be answerable in good will without purpose and when it is least looked for, they begin to bethink themselves, and make wise to believe that he is slacked, and feigning new suspicions that they are not beloved, they make a countenance that they will in any wise put him out of their favor. Wherefore through these inconveniences the poor soul is constrained of very force to begin afresh, and to make her signs, as though he began his service but then, and all the day long pass up and down through the street, and when the woman goeth forth of her doors to accompany her to church and to every place where she goeth, and never to turn his eyes to other place. And here he returneth to weeping, to sighs, to heavy countenance, and, when he can talk with her, to swearing, to blaspheming, to desperation, and to all rages into which unhappy lovers are led by these wild beasts, that have greater thirst of blood than the very tigers. Such sorrowful tokens as these be are too often seen and known, and many times more of others than of the causer of them, and thus are they in few days so published that a step can not be made, nor the least sign that is, but it is noted with a thousand eyes. It happeneth them, that long before there be any pleasures of love betwixt them, they are guessed and judged of all the world. For when they see that their lover, now nigh death's door, clean vanquished with the cruelty and torments they put him to, determineth advisedly and in good earnest to draw back, then begin they make sign that they love him heartily, and do him all pleasures, and give themselves to him, lest if that fer-

vent desire should faint in him the fruit of love should withal be the less acceptable to him, and he ken them the less thank for doing all things contrarily. And in case this love be already known abroad, at this same time are all the effects known in like manner abroad that come of it, and so lose they their reputation, and the lover findeth that he hath lost time and labor and shortened his life in afflictions without any fruit or pleasure; because he came by his desires, not when they should have been so acceptable to him that they would have made him a most happy creature, but when he set little or nothing by them. For his heart was now so mortified with those bitter passions, that he had no more sense to taste the delight or contentation offered him."

Then said the Lord Octaviano, smiling: "You held your peace a while and refrained from speaking ill of women, but now you have so well hit them home that it appeared you waited a while to pluck up your strength, like them that retire backward to give a greater push at the encounter. And, to say the truth, it is ill done of you, for now methink you may have done and be pacified."

The Lady Emilia laughed, and turing her to the Duchess she said: "See, Madam, our enemies begin to break and to square one with another."

"Give me not this name," answered the Lord Octaviano, "for I am not your adversary; but this contention hath displeased me, not because I am sorry to see the victory upon women's side, but because it hath led the Lord Gaspar to revile them more than he ought, and the Lord Giuliano and Lord Cesare to praise them perhaps somewhat more than due; besides that through the length of the talk we have lost the understanding of

many other pretty matters that are yet behind to be said of the Courtier."

"See," quoth the Lady Emilia, "whether you be not our adversary; for the talk that is past grieveth you, and you would not that this so excellent a Gentlewoman of the Palace had been fashioned, not for that you have any more to say of the Courtier, for these Lords have spoken already what they know, and I believe neither you nor any man else can add ought thereto, but for the malice you bear to the honor of women."

"It is out of doubt," answered the Lord Octaviano, "besides that is already spoken of the Courtier, I could wish much more in him. But since every man is pleased that he shall be as he is, I am well pleased too, and would not have him altered in any point, save in making him somewhat more friendly to women than the Lord Gaspar, yet not perhaps so much as some of these Lords."

Then spake the Duchess: "In any case, we must see whether your wit be such that it can give the Courtier a greater perfection than these Lords have already done; therefore dispose yourself to utter that you have in your mind, else will we think that you also can not add unto him more than hath already been said, but that you minded to diminish the praises and worthiness of the Gentlewoman of the Palace, seeing you judge she is equal with the Courtier, whom by this mean you would have believed might be much more perfect than these Lords have fashioned him."

The Lord Octaviano laughed, and said: "The praises and dispraises given women more than due, have so filled the ears and mind of the hearers, that they have left no void room for anything else to stand in; besides that, in mine opinion, it is very late."

Then said the Duchess: "If we tarry till to-morrow, we shall have more time, and the praises and dispraises, which, you say, are given women on both sides passing measure, in the mean season will be clean out of these Lords' minds, and so shall they be apt to conceive the truth that you will tell us."

When the Duchess had thus spoken, she arose and, courteously dismissing them all, withdrew her to the bedchamber, and every man got him to his rest.

BOOK FOURTH

THINKING to write out the communication that was had the fourth night, after the other mentioned in the former books, I feel among sundry discourses a bitter thought that gripeth me in my mind and maketh me to call to remembrance worldly miseries and our deceitful hopes, and how fortune, many times in the very midst of our race, otherwhile nigh the end, disappointeth our frail and vain purposes, sometime drowneth them before they can once come to have a sight of the haven afar off. It causeth me therefore to remember that not long after these reasonings were had, cruel death bereaved our house of three most rare gentlemen, when in their prosperous age and forwardness of honor they most flourished; and of them the first was the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino, who, assaulted with a sharp disease, and more than once brought to the last cast, although his mind was of such courage that for a time in spite of death he kept soul and body together, yet did he end his natural course long before he came to his ripe age—a very great loss not in our house only and to his friends and kinsfolk, but to his country and to all Lombardy. Not long after died the Lord Cesare Gonzaga, which to all that were acquainted with him left a bitter and sorrowful remembrance of his death. For since Nature so seldom bringeth forth such kinds of men as she doth, meet it seemed that she should not so soon have bereaved us of him. For undoubtedly a man may say that the Lord Cesare was taken from us even at the very

time when he began to show more than a hope of himself, and to be esteemed as his excellent qualities deserved. For with many virtuous acts he already gave a good testimony of his worthiness and besides his nobleness of birth, he excelled also in the ornament of letters, of martial prowess, and of every worthy quality. So that for his goodness, wit, nature, and knowledge, there was nothing so high that might not have been hoped for at his hands. Within a short while after, the death of Messer Robert of Bari was also a great heaviness to the whole house; for reason seemed to persuade every man to take heavily the death of a young man of good behavior, pleasant and most rare in the beauty of physiognomy, and, in the making of his person, with as lucky and lively a towardness as a man could have wished. These men therefore, had they lived, I believe would have come to that pass that unto whoso had known them they would have showed a manifest proof how much the Court of Urbino was worthy to be commended, and how furnished it was with noble knights, the which, in a manner, all the rest have done that were brought up in it. For truly there never issued out of the house of Troy so many great men and captains as there have come men out of this house for virtue very singular and in great estimation with all men. For, as you know, Sir Federico Fregoso was made Archbishop of Salerno; Count Louis, Bishop of Baious; the Lord Octaviano Fregoso, Duke of Genoa; Messer Bernardo Bibbiena, Cardinal of Santa Maria in Portico; Messer Pietro Bembo, Secretary to Pope Leo; the Lord Giuliano was exalted to the Dukedom of Nemours and to the great estate he is presently in. The Lord Francescomaria della Rovere, General of Rome, he was also made Duke of Urbino, although a much more

praise may be given to the house where he was brought up, that in it he hath proved so rare and excellent a lord in all virtuous qualities, as a man may behold, than that he attained unto the Dukedom of Urbino; and no small cause thereof, I think, was the noble company where in daily conversation he always heard and saw commendable nature. Therefore, methink, whether it be by hap or through the favor of the stars, the same cause that so long a time hath granted unto Urbino very good governors, doth still continue and bringeth forth the like effects. And therefore it is to be hoped that prosperous fortune will still increase these so virtuous doings that the happiness of the house and of the State shall not only not diminish, but rather daily increase; and thereof we see already many evident tokens, among which, I reckon the chiefest to be, that the heaven hath granted such a lady as is the Lady Eleanora Gonzaga, the new Duchess. For if ever there were coupled in one body alone, knowledge, wit, grace, beauty, sober conversation, gentleness, and every other honest quality, in her they are so linked together that there is made thereof a chain that frameth and setteth forth every gesture of hers with all these conditions together. Let us therefore proceed in our reasonings upon the Courtier, with hope that after us there shall not want such as shall take notable and worthy examples of virtue at the present Court of Urbino, as we now do at the former.

It was thought, therefore, as the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino was wont to rehearse, that the next day after the reasonings contained in the last book, the Lord Octaviano was not much seen; for many deemed that he had gotten himself out of company to think well upon that he had to say without trouble. Therefore, when the

company was assembled at the accustomed hour where the Duchess was, they made the Lord Octaviano to be diligently sought for, which in a good while appeared not, so that many of the gentlemen and damsels of the Court fell to dancing and to mind other pastimes, supposing for that night they should have no more talk of the Courtier.

And now were they all settled about one thing or another, when the Lord Octaviano came in, almost no more looked for; and beholding the Lord Cesare and the Lord Gaspar dancing, after he had made his reverence to the Duchess, he said smiling: "I had well hoped we should have heard the Lord Gaspar speak some ill of women this night too; but since I see him dance with one, I imagine he is agreed with all. And I am glad that the controversy, or, to term it better, the reasoning of the Courtier is thus ended."

"Not ended, I warrant you," answered the Duchess, "for I am not such an enemy to men as you be to women, and therefore I will not have the Courtier bereaved from his due honor and the tournaments which you yourself promised him yesternight."

And when she had thus spoken, she commanded them all, after that dance was ended, to place themselves after the wonted manner, the which was done.

And as they stood all with heedful expectation, the Lord Octaviano said: "Madam, since for that I wished many other good qualities in the Courtier, it followeth by promise that I must entreat upon them. I am well willing to utter my mind; not with opinion that I can speak all that may be said in the matter, but only so much as shall suffice to root out of your mind that which yesternight was objected to me; namely, that I spake

it more to withdraw the praises from the Gentlewoman of the Palace, in doing you falsely to believe that other excellent qualities might be added to the Courtier, and with that policy prefer him before her, than for that it is so indeed. Therefore, to frame myself also to the hour, which is later than it was wont to be when we began our reasonings at other times, I will be brief. Thus continuing in the talk that these Lords have ministered, which I full and wholly allow and confirm, I say, that of things which we call good, some there be that simply and of themselves are always good, as temperance, valiant courage, health, and all virtues that bring quietness to men's minds. Other be good for divers respects and for the end they be applied unto, as the laws, liberality, riches, and other like. I think therefore that the Courtier, if he be of the perfection that Count Lodovico and Sir Federico have described him, may indeed be a good thing and worthy praise; but for all that not simply, nor of himself, but for respect of the end whereto he may be applied. For doubtless if the Courtier with his nobleness of birth, comely behavior, pleasantness, and practice in so many exercises, should bring forth no other fruit but to be such a one for himself, I would not think, to come by this perfect trade of Courtiership, that a man should of reason bestow so much study and pains about it, as whoso will compass it must do. But I would say rather that many of the qualities appointed him—as dancing, singing, and sporting—were lightness and vanity, and in a man of estimation rather to be dispraised than commended; because those precise fashions, the setting forth oneself, merry talk, and such other matters belonging to entertainment of women and love (although perhaps many other be of a contrary opinion), do many

times nothing else but womanish the minds, corrupt youth, and bring them to a most wanton trade of living; whereupon afterward ensue these effects, that the name of Italy is brought into slander, and few there be that have the courage, I will not say to jeopard their life, but to enter once into a danger. And without peradventure there be infinite other things, that if a man bestow his labor and study about them would bring forth much more profit, both in peace and in war, than this trade of Courtiership of itself alone. But in case the Courtier's doings be directed to the good end they ought to be, and which I mean, methink then they should not only not be hurtful or vain, but most profitable and deserve infinite praise.

"The end, therefore, of a perfect Courtier (whereof hitherto nothing hath been spoken) I believe is to purchase him, by the mean of the qualities which these Lords have given him, in such wise the good will and favor of the prince he is in service withal, that he may break his mind to him, and always inform him frankly of the truth of every matter meet for him to understand, without fear or peril to displease him. And when he knoweth his mind is bent to commit anything unseemly for him, to be bold to stand with him in it, and to take courage after an honest sort at the favor which he hath gotten him through his good qualities, to dissuade him from every ill purpose, and to set him in the way of virtue. And so shall the Courtier, if he have the goodness in him that these Lords have given him, accompanied with readiness of wit, pleasantness, wisdom, knowledge in letters, and so many other things, understand how to behave himself readily in all occurrences to drive into his prince's head what honor and profit shall ensue to

him and to his by justice, liberality, valiantness of courage, meekness, and by the other virtues that belong to a good prince, and contrarywise what slander and damage cometh of the vices contrary to them. And therefore, in mine opinion, as music, sports, pastimes, and other pleasant fashions are, as a man would say, the flower of courtliness, even so is the training and the helping forward of the prince to goodness and the fearing him from evil, the fruit of it. And because the praise of welldoing consisteth chiefly in two points, whereof the one is, in choosing out an end that our purpose is directed unto, that is good indeed; the other, the knowledge to find out apt and meet means to bring it to the appointed good end. Sure it is that the mind of him which thinketh to work so that his prince shall not be deceived, nor led with flatterers, railers, liars, but shall know both the good and the bad, and bear love to the one and hatred to the other, is directed to a very good end.

"Methink, again, that the qualities which these Lords have given the Courtier may be a good means to compass it; and that, because among many vices that we see nowadays in many of our princes, the greatest are ignorance and self-liking, and the root of these two mischiefs is nothing else but lying, which vice is worthily abhorred of God and man, and more hurtful to princes than any other; because they have more scarcity than of anything else, of that which they need to have more plenty of than of any other thing, namely, of such as should tell them the truth and put them in mind of goodness; for enemies be not driven of love to do these offices, for they delight rather to have them live wickedly and never to amend; on the other side, they dare not

rebuke them openly for fear they be punished. As for friends, few of them have free passage to them, and those few have a respect to reprehend their vices so freely as they do private men's, and many times, to curry favor and to purchase good will, they give themselves to nothing else but to feed them with matters that may delight and content their mind, though they be foul and dishonest. So that of friends they become flatterers, and, to make a hand by that strict familiarity, they speak and work always to please, and for the most part open the way with lies, which in the Prince's mind engender ignorance, not of outward matters only, but also of his own self. And this may be said to be the greatest and foulest lie of all other, because the ignorant mind deceiveth himself and inwardly maketh lies of himself. Of this it cometh that great men, besides that they never understand the truth of anything, drunken with the licentious liberty that rule bringeth with it, and with abundance of delicacies drowned in pleasures, are so far out of the way, and their mind is so corrupted in seeing themselves always obeyed and, as it were, worshiped with so much reverence and praise, without, not only any reproof at all, but also gainsaying, that through this ignorance they wade to an extreme self-liking, so that afterward they admit no counsel nor advice of others. And because they believe that the understanding how to rule is a most easy matter, and to compass it there needeth neither art nor learning, but only stoutness, they bend their mind and all their thoughts to the maintenance of that port they keep, thinking it the true happiness to do what a man lusteth. Therefore do some abhor reason and justice, because they ween it a bridle and a certain mean to

bring them in bondage and to minish in them the contentation and heart's ease that they have to bear rule, if they should observe it; and their rule were not perfect nor whole if they should be compelled to obey unto duty and honesty, because they have an opinion that whoso obeyeth is no right Lord indeed.

"Therefore, taking these principles for a precedent and suffering themselves to be led with self-liking, they wax lofty, and with a stately countenance, with sharp and cruel conditions, with pompous garments, gold and jewels, and with coming, in a manner, never abroad to be seen, they think to get estimation and authority among men, and to be counted almost gods. But there are, in my judgment, like the colossi that were made in Rome the last year upon the feast-day of the place of Agone, which outwardly declared a likeness of great men and horses of triumph, and inwardly were full of tow and rags. But the princes of this sort are so much worse as the colossi by their own weighty poise stand upright of themselves, and they because they be ill counterpoised and without line or level placed upon unequal ground, through their own weightiness overthrow themselves, and from one error run into infinite. Because their ignorance being annexed with this false opinion that they can not err, and that the port they keep cometh of their knowledge, leadeth of them every way by right or by wrong to lay hand upon possessions boldly, so they may come by them. But in case they would take advisement to know and to work that which they ought, they would as well strive not to reign as they do to reign, because they should perceive what a naughty and dangerous matter it were for subjects that ought to be governed to be wiser than the princes that should govern. You

may see that ignorance in music, in dancing, in riding hurteth no man, yet he that is no musician is ashamed and afraid to sing in the presence of others; or to dance, he that can not; or he that sitteth not well a horse, to ride; but of the unskilfulness to govern people arise so many evils, deaths, destructions, mischiefs and confusions, that it may be called the deadliest plague upon the earth. And yet some princes most ignorant in government are not bashful nor ashamed to take upon them to govern, I will not say in the presence of four or half a dozen persons, but in the face of the world; for their degree is set so on loft that all eyes behold them, and therefore not their great vices only, but their least faults of all are continually noted. As it is written that Cymon was ill spoken of because he loved wine; Scipio, sleep; Lucullus, banquetings. But would God the princes of these our times would couple their vices with so many virtues as did they of old time; which, if they were out of the way in any point, yet refused they not the exhortations and lessons of such as they deemed meet to correct those faults; yea, they sought with great instance to frame their life by the rule of notable personages; as Epaminondas by Lysias of Pythagoras's sect; Agesilaus by Xenophon, Scipio by Panætius, and infinite others. But in case a grave philosopher should come before any of our princes, or whoever beside, that would show them plainly and without any circumstance the horrible face of true virtue and teach them good manners and what the life of a good prince ought to be, I am assured they would abhor him at the first sight, as a most venomous serpent, or else they would make him a laughing-stock, as a most vile matter.

"I say, therefore, that since nowadays princes are so

corrupt through ill usages, ignorance, and false self-liking, and that it is so hard a matter to give them the knowledge of the truth and to bend them to virtue, and men with lies and flattery and such naughty means seek to curry favor with them, the Courtier by the mean of those honest qualities that Count Lodovico and Sir Federico have given him, may soon, and ought to, go about so to purchase him the good will and allure unto him the mind of his prince, that he may make him a free and safe passage to commune with him in every matter without troubling him. And if he be such a one as is said, he shall compass it with small pain, and so may he always open unto him the truth of every matter at ease. Besides this by little and little distil into his mind goodness, and teach him continence, stoutness of courage, justice, temperance, making him to taste what sweetness is hid under that little bitterness which at the first sight appeareth unto him that withstandeth vices; which are always hurtful, displeasant, and accompanied with ill report and shame, even as virtues are profitable, pleasant and praisable, and inflame him to them with the examples of many famous captains, and of other notable personages, unto whom they of old time used to make images of metal and marble, and sometime of gold, and to set them up in common haunted places, as well for the honor of them as for an encouraging of others, that with an honest envy they might also endeavor themselves to reach unto that glory. In this wise may he lead them through the rough way of virtue, as it were, decking it about with boughs to shadow it, and strewing it over with sightly flowers, to ease the grief of the painful journey in him that is but of a weak force. And sometime with music, sometime with arms and horses,

sometime with rhymes and meter, otherwhile with communication of love, and with all those ways that these Lords have spoken of, continually keep that mind of his occupied in honest pleasure; imprinting notwithstanding therein always beside, as I have said, in company with these flickering provocations some virtuous condition, and beguiling him with a wholesome craft, as the wary physicians do, who many times, when they minister to young and tender children in their sickness a medicine of bitter taste, anoint the cup about the brim with some sweet liquor. The Courtier, therefore, applying to such a purpose this veil of pleasure in every time, in every place, and in every exercise, he shall attain to his end, and deserve much more praise and recompense than for any other good work that he can do in the world, because there is no treasure that doeth so universal profit as doeth a good prince, nor any mischief so universally hurt as an ill prince. Therefore is there also no pain so bitter and cruel that were a sufficient punishment for those naughty and wicked Courtiers that make their honest and pleasant matters and their good qualities a cloak for an ill end, and by mean of them seek to come in favor with their princes for to corrupt them, and to stray them from the way of virtue and to lead them to vice. For a man may say that such as these be do infect with deadly poison, not one vessel whereof one man alone drinketh, but the common fountain that all the people resorteth to."

The Lord Octaviano held his peace as if he would have said no more, but the Lord Gaspar: "I can not see, my Lord Octaviano," said he, "that this goodness of mind and continency, and the other virtues which you will have the Courtier to show his Lord, may be learned;

but I suppose they are given the men that have them by nature and of God. And that it is so, you may see that there is no man so wicked and of so ill conditions in the world, nor so untemperate and unjust, which if he be asked the question, will confess himself such a one. But every man, be he never so wicked, is glad to be counted just, continent and good; which should not be so, in case these virtues might be learned, because it is no shame not to know the thing that a man hath not studied, but a rebuke it is not to have that which we ought to be endowed withal of nature. Therefore doth each man seek to cover the defaults of nature, as well in the mind as also in the body, the which is to be seen in the blind, lame, crooked, and other maimed and deformed creatures. For although these imperfections may be laid to nature, yet doth it grieve each man to have them in himself; because it seemeth by the testimony of the selfsame nature that a man hath that default or blemish, as it were, for a patent and token of his ill inclination. The fable that is reported of Epimetheus doth also confirm mine opinion, which was so unskilful in dividing the gifts of nature unto men, that he left them much more need of everything than all other living creatures. Whereupon Prometheus stole the politic wisdom from Minerva and Vulcan that men have to get their living withal. Yet had they not for all that civil wisdom to gather themselves together into cities, and the knowledge to live with civility, because it was kept in the castle of Jupiter by most circumspect overseers, which put Prometheus in such fear that he durst not approach nigh them. Whereupon Jupiter, taking pity upon the misery of men, that could not fellowship together for lack of civil virtue, but were torn in pieces by wild

beasts, sent Mercury to the earth to carry justice and shame, that these two things might furnish cities and gather citizens together; and willed that they should be given them, not as other arts were, wherein one cunning man sufficeth for many ignorant, as physic, but that they should be imprinted in every man. And ordained a law, that all such as were without justice and shame should be banished and put to death, as contagious to the city. Behold, then, my Lord Octaviano, God hath granted these virtues to men, and are not to be learned, but be natural."

Then the Lord Octaviano, somewhat smiling: "Will you, then, my Lord Gaspar," quoth he, "have men to be so unfortunate and of so peevish a judgment, that with policy they have found out an art to tame the natures of wild beasts, as bears, wolves, lions, and may with the same teach a pretty bird to fly as a man lust, and return back from the wood and from his natural liberty of his own accord, to snares and bondage, and with the same policy can not, or will not, find out arts whereby they may profit themselves and with study and diligence make their mind more perfect? This, in mine opinion, were like as if physicians should study with all diligence to have the art only to heal felons in fingers and the red gum in young children, and lay aside the cure of fevers, pleurisy, and other sore diseases; the which how out of reason it were, every man may consider. I believe therefore that the moral virtues are not in us altogether by nature, because nothing can at any time be accustomed unto that which is naturally his contrary; as it is seen in a stone, the which, though it be cast upward ten thousand times, yet will he never accustom to go up of himself. Therefore in case virtues were as natural to

us as heaviness to the stone, we should never accustom ourselves to vice. Nor yet are vices natural in this sort, for then should we never be virtuous; and a great wickedness and folly it were, to punish men for the faults that came of nature without our offense; and this error should the laws commit, which appoint not punishment to the offenders for the trespass that is past—because it can not be brought to pass that the thing that is done may not be done—but they have a respect to the time to come, that whoso hath offended may offend no more, or else will ill precedent give not a cause for others to offend. And thus yet they are in opinion that virtues may be learned, which is most true, because we are born apt to receive them, and in like manner vices; and therefore there groweth a custom in us of both the one and the other through long use, so that first we practise virtue or vice, after that we are virtuous or vicious. The contrary is known in the things that be given us of nature; for first we have the power to practise them, after that we do practise; as it is in the senses, for first we can see, hear, feel, and after that we do see, hear, and feel; although notwithstanding many of these doings be also set out more sightly with teaching. Whereupon good schoolmasters do not only instruct their children in letters, but also in good nurture in eating, drinking, talking, and going with certain gestures meet for the purpose.

"Therefore, even as in the other arts, so also in the virtues, it is behoofful to have a teacher that with lessons and good exhortations may stir up and quicken in us these moral virtues, whereof we have the seed inclosed and buried in the soul, and, like the good husbandman, till them and open the way for them, weeding

from about them the briars and darnel of appetites, which many times so shadow and choke our minds that they suffer them not to bud nor to bring forth the happy fruits that alone ought to be wished to grow in the hearts of men. In this sort, then, is naturally in every one of us justice and shame, which, you say, Jupiter sent to the earth for all men. But even as a body without eyes, how sturdy ever he be, if he remove to any certain place, oftentimes faileth, so the root of these virtues that be potentially engendered in our minds, if it be not aided with teaching, doth often come to naught. Because if it should be brought into doing and to his perfect custom, it is not satisfied, as is said, with nature alone, but hath need of a politic usage and of reason, which may cleanse and scour that soul, taking away the dim veil of ignorance, whereof arise, in a manner, all the errors in men. For in case good and ill were well known and perceived, every man would always choose the good and shun the ill. Therefore may virtue be said to be, as it were, a wisdom and an understanding to choose the good; and vice, a lack of foresight and an ignorance that leadeth to judge falsely. Because, men never choose the ill with opinion that it is ill, but they are deceived through a certain likeness of good."

Then answered the Lord Gaspar: "Yet are there many that know plainly they do ill, and do it notwithstanding, and that because they more esteem the present pleasure which they feel than the punishment that they doubt shall fall upon them as thieves, murderers and such other."

The Lord Octaviano said: "True pleasure is always good, and true sorrow evil; therefore these be deceived in taking false pleasure for true, and true sorrow for

false; whereupon many times, through false pleasures, they run into true displeasures. The art, therefore, that teacheth to discern this truth from falsehood, may in like case be learned; and the virtue by the which we choose this good indeed, and not that which falsely appeareth to be, may be called true knowledge, and more available for man's life than any other, because it expelleth ignorance, of the which, as I have said, spring all evils."

Then Messer Pietro Bembo: "I wot not, my Lord Octaviano," quoth he, "how the Lord Gaspar should grant you that of ignorance should spring all evils, and that there be not many which in offending know for certainty that they do offend, neither are they any deal deceived in the true pleasure, nor yet in the true sorrow; because it is sure that such as be incontinent judge with reason and uprightly, and know it, whereunto they are provoked by lust contrary to due, to be ill, and therefore they make resistance and set reason to match greedy desire, whereupon ariseth the battle of pleasure and sorrow against judgment. Finally, reason overcome by greedy desire far the mightier, is clean without succor, like a ship that for a time defendeth herself from the tempestuous seastorms, at the end, beaten with the too raging violence of winds, her cables and tacklings broken, yieldeth up to be driven at the will of fortune, without occupying helm or any manner help of pilot for her safeguard. Forthwith therefore commit they the offenses with a certain doubtful remorse of conscience and, in a manner, whether they will or no; the which they would not do, unless they knew the thing that they do to be ill, but without striving of reason would run wholly headlong after greedy desire, and then should

they not be incontinent, but untemperate, which is much worse. Therefore is incontinency said to be a diminished vice, because it hath in it part of reason, and likewise continency an unperfect virtue, because it hath in it part of affection. Therefore, methink that it can not be said that the offenses of the incontinent come of ignorance, or that they be deceived and offend not, when they know for a truth that they do offend."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "Certes, Messer Pietro, your argument is good; yet, in my mind, it is more apparent than true. For although the incontinent offend with that doubtfulness, and reason in their mind striveth against greedy desire, and that that is ill seemeth unto them to be ill indeed, yet have they no perfect knowledge of it, nor understand it so thoroughly as need requireth. Therefore of this it is rather a feeble opinion in them than certain knowledge, whereby they agree to have reason overcome by affection; but if they had in them true knowledge, there is no doubt but they would not offend, because evermore the thing whereby greedy desire overcometh reason is ignorance, neither can true knowledge be ever overcome by affection, which proceedeth from the body and not from the mind, and in case it be well ruled and governed by reason it becometh a virtue; if not, it becometh a vice. But such force Reason hath that she maketh the sense always to obey, and by wondrous means and ways pierceth lest ignorance should possess that which she ought to have; so that, although the spirits and the sinews and the bones have no reason in them, yet when there springeth in us that motion of the mind, that the imagination, as it were, pricketh forward and shaketh the bridle to the spirits, all the members are in a readiness, the feet to run, the

hands to take or to do that which the mind thinketh upon; and this is also manifestly known in many which unwittingly otherwhile eat some loathsome and abhorring meat, but so well dressed that to their taste it appeareth most delicate; afterward, understanding what manner thing it was, it doth not only grieve them and loath them in their mind, but the body also agreeth with the judgment of the mind, that of force they cast that meat up again."

The Lord Octaviano followed on still in his talk; but the Lord Giuliano interrupting him: "My Lord Octaviano," quoth he, "if I have well understood, you have said that continency is an unperfect virtue, because it hath in it part of affection; and meseemeth that the virtue, where there is in our mind a variance between reason and greedy desire, which fighteth and giveth the victory to reason, ought to be reckoned more perfect than that which overcometh having neither greedy desire nor any affection to withstand it; because it seemeth that that mind abstaineth not from ill for virtue's sake, but refraineth the doing it because he hath no will to do it."

Then the Lord Octaviano: "Which," quoth he, "would you esteem the valianter captain, either he that hazardeth himself in open fight, and notwithstanding vanquisheth his enemies, or he that by his virtue and knowledge weakeneth them in bringing them in case not able to fight, and so without battle or any jeopardy discomfiteth them?"

"He," quoth the Lord Giuliano, "that overcometh with most surety is out of doubt most to be praised, so that this assured victory of his proceed not through the slackness of the enemies."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "You have judged

aright. And therefore I say unto you, that continency may be compared to a captain that fighteth manly, and though his enemies be strong and well appointed, yet giveth he them the overthrow, but for all that not without much ado and danger. But temperance free from all disquieting, is like the captain that without resistance overcometh and reigneth. And having in the mind where she is, not only assuaged, but clean quenched the fire of greedy desire, even as a good prince in civil war despatcheth the seditious inward enemies, and giveth the scepter and whole rule to reason, so in like case this virtue not enforcing the mind, but pouring thereinto through most quiet ways a vehement persuasion that may incline him to honesty, maketh him quiet and full of rest, in every part equal and of good proportion, and on every side framed of a certain agreement with himself, that filleth him with such a clear calmness that he is never out of patience, and becometh full and wholly most obedient to reason, and ready to turn unto her all his motions, and follow her where she lust to lead him, without any resistance, like a tender lamb that runneth, standeth, and goeth always by the ewe's side and moveth only as he seeeth her do. This virtue, therefore, is most perfect and is chiefly requisite in princes, because of it arise many other."

Then the Lord Cesare Gonzaga: "I wot not," quoth he, "what virtues requisite for princes may arise of this temperance, yet if it be that she riddeth the mind of affections, as you say, which perhaps were meet for some monk or hermit; but I can not see how it should be requisite for a prince that is courageous, freehearted, and of prowess in martial feats, for whatsoever is done to him never to have anger, hatred, good will, disdain,

lust, nor any affection in him; nor how without this he can get him authority among the people and soldiers."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "I have not said that temperance should thoroughly rid and root out of men's minds affections; neither should it be well so to do, because there be yet in affections some parts good; but that which in affections is corrupt and striving against honesty, she bringeth to obey unto reason. Therefore it is not meet, to rid the troublesome disquietness of the mind, to root up affections clean; for this were as if, to avoid drunkenness, an act should be established that no man should drink wine; or because, otherwhile in running a man taketh a fall, every man should be forbid running. Mark them that break horses; they break them not from their running and coming on loft, but they will have them to do it at the time and obedience of the rider. The affections therefore that be cleansed and tried by temperance are assistant to virtue, as anger, that helpeth manliness; hatred against the wicked helpeth justice; and likewise the other virtues are aided by affections which, in case they were clean taken away, they would leave reason very feeble and faint, so that it should little prevail, like a ship-master that is without wind in a great calm. Marvel you not then, my Lord Cesare, if I have said that of temperance arise many other virtues; for when a mind is in tune with this harmony, by the mean of reason he easily receiveth afterward true manliness, which maketh him bold and safe from all danger and, in a manner, above worldly passions. Likewise Justice, an undefiled virgin, friend to sobermode and goodness, queen of all other virtues, because she teacheth to do that which a man ought to do, and to shun that a man ought to shun, and therefore is

she most perfect, because through her the works of the other virtues are brought to pass, and she is a help to him that hath her both for himself and for others; without the which, as it is commonly said, Jupiter himself could not well govern his kingdom. Stoutness of courage doth also follow after these, and maketh them all the greater; but she can not stand alone, because whoso hath not other virtues can not be of a stout courage. Of these, then, wisdom is guide, which consisteth in a certain judgment to choose well. And in this happy chain are also linked liberality, sumptuousness, the desire to save a man's estimation, meekness, pleasantness, courtesy in talk, and many other which is now no time to speak of. But in case our Courtier will do as we have said, he shall find them all in his prince's mind; and daily he shall see spring such beautiful flowers and fruits as all the delicious gardens in the world have not the like; and he shall feel very great contentation within himself when he remembereth that he hath given him, not the things which foolish persons give, which is gold, or silver, plate, garments, and such matters, whereof he that giveth them hath himself very great scarcity, and he that receiveth them exceeding great store, but that virtue which perhaps, among all the matters that belong unto man, is the chiefest and rarest, that is to say, the manner and way to rule and to reign in the right kind. Which alone were sufficient to make men happy, and to bring once again into the world the Golden Age, which is written to have been when Saturnus reigned in the old time."

Here, when the Lord Octaviano paused a little, as if he would have taken respite, the Lord Gaspar said: "Which reckon you, my Lord Octaviano, the happiest

government and that were most to purpose to bring into the world again that Golden Age which you have made mention of, either the reign of so good a prince, or the governance of a good commonwealth?"

The Lord Octaviano answered: "I would always prefer the reign of a good prince, because it is a government more agreeable to nature, and, if it be lawful to compare small matters with infinite, more like unto God's, which one and alone governeth the universal. But, leaving this, you see that in whatsoever is brought to pass with the policy of man—as armies, great sailing-vessels, buildings, and other like matters—the whole is committed to one alone, to dispose thereof at his will. Likewise in our body all the members travail and are occupied as the heart thinketh good. Besides this, it seemeth meet that people should as well be governed by one prince as many other living creatures be, whom nature teacheth this obedience as a most sovereign matter. Mark you whether deer, cranes, and many other fowls, when they take their flight do not always set a prince before, whom they follow and obey. And bees, as it were, with discourse of reason and with such reverence honor their queen as the most obedient people in the world can do. And therefore this is a very great argument that the sovereignty of a prince is more according to nature than a commonweal's."

Then Messer Pietro Bembo: "And methink," quoth he, "that since God hath given us liberty for a sovereign gift, it is not reason that it should be taken from us; nor that one man should be partner of it more than another, which happeneth under the rule of princes, who for the most part keep their people in most strict bondage. But in commonweals well in order this liberty is well kept.

Besides that, both in judgments and in advisements it happeneth oftener that the opinion of one alone is false than the opinion of many, because troublous affection, either through anger or through spite, or through lust, sooner entereth into the mind of one alone than into the multitudes, which, in a manner, like a great quantity of water, is less subject to corruption than a small deal. I say again that the example of the beasts and fowls doth not make to purpose; for both deer and cranes and the rest do not always set one and the self foremost for them to follow and obey, but they still change and vary, giving this preferment sometime to one, otherwhile to another, and in this manner it becometh rather the form of a commonweal than of a kingdom; and this may be called a true and equal liberty, when they that sometime command obey again another while. The example likewise of the bees, methink, is not alike, because that queen of theirs is not of their own kind; and therefore he that will give unto men a worthy head indeed must be fain to find him of another kind, and of a more noble nature than man's, if men, of reason, should obey him as flocks and herds of cattle that obey not a beast their like, but a shepherd and a herdman, which is a man and of a more worthy kind than theirs. For these respects, I think, my Lord Octaviano, the government of a commonweal is more to be coveted than of a king."

Then the Lord Octaviano: "Against your opinion, Messer Pietro," quoth he, "I will allege but one reason, which is, that of ways to rule people well, there be only three kinds. The one a kingdom; the other, the rule of good men, which they of old time called Optimates; the third, the government of the people. And the transgressing, to term it so, and contrary vice that every one

of these is changed into, being apaid and corrupted, is when the kingdom becometh a tyranny, and when the governance of good men is changed into the hands of a few great men and not good, and when the rule of the people is at the disposition of the commonalty, which maketh a medley of the orders, suffereth the governance of the whole at the will of the multitude. Of these three ill governments, it is sure, the tyranny is the worst of all, as it may be proved by many reasons. It followeth, then, that of the three good the kingdom is the best, because it is contrary to the worst, for, as you know, the effects of contrary causes they be also contrary among themselves.

"As touching it that you have spoken of liberty, I answer, that true liberty ought not to be said to live as a man will, but to live according to good laws. And to obey is no less natural, profitable, and necessary than to command. And some things are born and so appointed and ordained by nature to command, as some other to obeisance. Truth it is, that there be two kinds of bearing rule—the one lordly and forcible, as masters over slaves, and in this doth the soul command the body; the other more mild and tractable, as good princes by way of the laws over their subjects, and in this reason commandeth greedy desire. And each of these two ways is profitable; because the body is created of nature apt to obey the soul, and so is desire to obey reason. There be also many men whose doings be applied only about the use of the body; and such as these be are so far wide from the virtuous as the soul from the body, and yet because they be reasonable creatures they be so much partners of reason as they do no more but know it; for they possess it not, nor yet have they the use of

it. These therefore be naturally bondmen, and better it is for them and more profitable to obey than to bear sway."

Then said the Lord Gaspar: "In what manner wise be they then to be commanded that be discreet and virtuous and not by nature bond?"

The Lord Octaviano answered: "With that tractable commandment kingly and civil. And to such it is well done otherwhile to commit the bearing of such offices as be meet for them, that they may likewise bear sway and rule over others of less wit than they be, yet so that the principal government may full and wholly depend upon the chief prince. And because you have said that it is an easier matter to corrupt the mind of one than of a great sort, I say that it is also an easier matter to find one good and wise than a great sort. Both good and wise ought a man to suppose a king may be, of a noble progeny, inclined to virtue of his own natural motion, and through the famous memory of his ancestors, and brought up in good conditions. And though he be not of another kind than man, as you have said is among the bees, yet if he be helped forward with the instructions, bringing up, and art of the Courtier, whom these Lords have fashioned so wise and good, he shall be most wise, most continent, most temperate, most manly, and most just, full of liberality, majesty, holiness, and mercy. Finally, he shall be most glorious and most dearly beloved both to God and man, through whose grace he shall attain to that heroical and noble virtue that shall make him pass the bounds of the nature of man, and shall rather be called a demigod than a man mortal. For God delighteth in and is the defender, not of those princes that will follow and counterfeit him in showing

great power, and make themselves to be worshiped of men, but of such as, beside power, whereby they are mighty, endeavor themselves to resemble Him also in goodness and wisdom, whereby they may have a will and a knowledge to do well and to be his ministers, distributing for the behoof of man the benefits and gifts that they receive of him. Therefore, even as in the firmament the sun and the moon and the other stars show to the world, as it were in a glass, a certain likeness of God; so upon the earth a much more liker image of God are those good princes that love and worship Him, and show unto the people the clear light of His justice, accompanied with a shadow of the heavenly reason and understanding; and such as these be doth God make partners of his true dealing, righteousness, justice, and goodness, and of those other happy benefits which I can not name, that disclose unto the world a much more evident proof of the Godhead than doth the light of the sun, or the continual turning of the firmament with the sundry course of the stars. It is God, therefore, that hath appointed the people under the custody of princes, which ought to have a diligent care over them, that they may make Him account of it, as good stewards do their lord, and love them and think their own all the profit and loss that happeneth to them, and principally above all things provide for their good estate and welfare. Therefore ought the prince not only to be good, but also to make others good, like the carpenter's square, that is not only straight and just itself, but also maketh straight and just whatsoever it is occupied about.

"And the greatest proof that the prince is good is when the people are good; because the life of the prince is a law and ringleader of the citizens and upon the con-

ditions of him must needs all others depend; neither is it meet for one that is ignorant to teach, nor for him that is out of order to give order, nor for him that falleth to help up another. Therefore, if the prince will execute these offices aright, it is requisite that he apply all his study and diligence to get knowledge, afterward to fashion within himself and observe unchangeably in everything the law of reason, not written in papers or in metal, but graven in his own mind, that it may be to him always not only familiar but inward, and live with him as a parcel of him; to the intent it may, night and day, in every time and place, admonish him and speak to him within his heart, ridding him of those troublous affections that untemperate minds feel, which because on the one side they be, as it were, cast into a most deep sleep of ignorance, on the other overwhelmed with the unquietness which they feel through their wayward and blind desires, they are stirred with an unquiet rage, as he that sleepeth otherwhile with strange and horrible visions; heaping then a greater power upon their naughty desire, there is heaped also a greater trouble withal. And when the prince can do what he will, then is it great jeopardy lest he will the thing that he ought not. Therefore said Bias well, that promotions declare what men be; for even as vessels while they are empty, though they have some chink in them, it can ill be perceived, but if they be filled with liquor they show by and by on what side the fault is, so corrupt and ill disposed minds seldom discover their vices but when they be filled with authority. For then they are not able to carry the heavy burden of power, but forsake themselves and scatter on every side greedy desire, pride, wrath, solemness and such tyrannical fashions as they have within them.

Whereupon without regard they persecute the good and wise, and promote the wicked. And they can not abide to have friendships, assemblies and conferences among citizens in cities; but maintain spies, promoters, murderers and cutthroats, to put men in fear and to make them become fainthearted. And they sow debate and strife to keep them in division and weak. And of these manners ensue infinite damages and the utter undoing of the poor people, and oftentimes cruel slaughter, or at the least continual fear to the tyrants themselves. For good princes fear not for themselves, but for their sakes whom they rule over. And tyrants fear very them whom they rule over. Therefore the more number of people they rule over and the mightier they are, the more is their fear and the more enemies they have. How fearful, think you, and of what an unquiet mind was Clearchus, tyrant of Pontus, every time he went into the market-place, or into the theater, or to any banquet, or other haunted place? For, as it is written, he slept shut into a chest. Or Aristodemus of Argos? which of his bed had made to himself a prison, or little better, for in his palace he had a little room hanging in the air, and so high that he should climb to it with a ladder, and there slept he with a woman of his, whose mother overnight took away the ladder, and in the morning set it to again. Clean contrary to this, therefore, ought the life of a good prince to be—free and safe and as dear to his subjects as their own, and so framed that he may have a part of both the doing and beholding life, as much as shall be behoofful for the benefit of his people."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "And which of the two lives, my Lord Octaviano," quoth he, "do you think most meet for a prince?"

The Lord Octaviano answered, smiling: "You think perhaps that I stand in mine own conceit to be the excellent Courtier that ought to know so many matters, and to apply them to the good end I have spoken of. But remember yourself that these Lords have fashioned him with many qualities that be not in me; therefore let us first do our best to find him out, for I remit me to him both in this and in all other things that belong to a good prince."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "I think," quoth he, "that if any of the qualities given the Courtier want in you, it is rather music and dancing, and the rest of small account, than such as belong to the instructing of a prince and to this end of courtliness."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "They are not of small account, all of them that help to purchase a man the favor of a prince, which is necessary, as we have said, before the Courtier adventure to teach him virtue, the which, I trow, I have showed you may be learned, and profiteth as much as ignorance hurteth, whereof spring all vices, and specially that false liking a man hath of himself. Therefore, in mine opinion, I have sufficiently said, and perhaps more than my promise was."

Then the Duchess: "We shall be so much the more bound," quoth she, "to your gentleness, as you shall satisfy us more than promise. Therefore stick not to speak your fancy concerning the Lord Gaspar's request. And of good fellowship show us beside whatsoever you would teach your prince, if he had need of instructions; and set the case that you have thoroughly gotten his favor, so as it may be lawful for you to tell him frankly whatever cometh in your mind."

The Lord Octaviano laughed and said: "If I had the

favor of some prince that I know, and should tell him frankly mine opinion, I doubt me I should soon lose it; besides that, to teach him I should need first to learn myself. Notwithstanding, since it is your pleasure that I shall answer the Lord Gaspar in this point also, I say that, in my mind, princes ought to give themselves both to the one and the other of the two lives, but yet somewhat more to the beholding; because this in them is divided into two parts, whereof the one consisteth in knowing well and judging, the other in commanding aright and in such wise as it should be done, and reasonable matters and such as they have authority in, commanding them to him that of reason ought to obey, and in time and place accordingly. And of this spake Duke Federico when he said, 'He that can command is always obeyed.' And to command is evermore the principal office of princes, which notwithstanding ought many times also to see with their eyes and to be present at the deed doing, and according to the time and the business otherwhile also be doing themselves, and yet hath all this a part with action or practice. But the end of the active or doing life ought to be the beholding—as of war, peace, and of pains, rest. Therefore is it also the office of a good prince so to trade his people, and with such laws and statutes, that they may live in rest and in peace, without danger and with increase of wealth, and enjoy praisably this end of their practices and actions, which ought to be quietness. Because there have been oftentimes many commonweals and princes, that in war were always most flourishing and mighty, and immediately after they have had peace they fell into decay and lost their puissance and brightness, like iron unoccupied. And this came of nothing else but because

they had no good trade of living in peace, nor the knowledge to enjoy the benefit of ease. And it is not a matter lawful to be always in war without seeking at the end to come to a peace; although some princes suppose that their drift ought principally to be to bring in subjection their borderers, and therefore train up their people in a warlike wildness of spoil, and murder, and such matters; they wage them to exercise it, and call it virtue. Whereupon in the old time it was a usage among the Scythians that whoso had not slain some enemy of his could not drink in solemn banquets of the goblet that was carried about to his companions. In other places the manner was to rear about one's sepulture so many obelisks as he that lay there buried had slain of his enemies. And all these things and many more were invented to make men warlike, only to bring others in subjection, which was a matter almost unpossible, because it is an infinite piece of work until all the world be brought under obeisance; and not very reasonable, according to the law of nature, which will not have that in others the thing should please us which in ourselves is a grief to us.

"Therefore ought princes to make their people warlike, not for a greedy desire to rule, but to defend themselves the better, and their own people, from whoso would attempt to bring them in bondage, or to do them wrong in any point. Or else to drive out tyrants, and to govern well that were ill handled. Or else to bring into bondage them that of nature were such that they deserved to be made bondmen, with intent to govern them well, and to give them ease, rest, and peace. And to this end also ought to be applied the laws, and all statutes of justice, in punishing the ill, not for malice, but

because there should be no ill, and lest they should be a hindrance to the quiet living of the good; because in very deed it is an uncomely matter, and worthy blame, that in war, which of itself is naught, men should show themselves stout and wise, and in peace and rest, which is good, ignorant and so blockish that they wist not how to enjoy a benefit. Even as therefore in war they ought to bend their people to the profitable and necessary virtues to come by that end, which is peace, so in peace to come by the end thereof also, which is quietness, they ought to bend them to honest virtues, which be the end of the profitable. And in this wise shall the subjects be good, and the prince shall have many more to commend and to reward than to chastise. And the rule both for the subjects and for the prince shall be most happy, not lordly, as the master over his bondmen, but soft and meek, as a good father over his good child."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "Gladly," quoth he, "would I understand what manner virtues these are that be profitable and necessary in war, and what honest in peace."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "All be good and help the turn, because they tend to a good end. Yet chiefly in war is much set by that true manliness which maketh the mind void from all passions, so that he not only feareth not perils, but passeth not upon them. Likewise steadfastness and patience, abiding with a quiet and untroubled mind all the strokes of fortune. It is behoofful likewise in war and at all other times to have all the virtues that belong to honesty, as justice, staidness, sobermode; but much more in peace and rest, because oftentimes men in prosperity and rest, when favorable fortune fawneth upon them, wax unrighteous, untemperate,

and suffer themselves to be corrupted with pleasures. Therefore such as be in this state have very great need of these virtues, because rest bringeth ill conditions too soon into men's minds; whereupon arose a proverb in old time, that rest is not to be given to bondmen. And it is thought that the Pyramids of Egypt were made to keep the people occupied, because unto every man use to abide pains is most profitable. There be, moreover, many other virtues, all helpful, but it sufficeth for this time to have spoken this much; for if I could teach my prince and train him in this manner and so virtuous a bringing up, as we have set forth, in doing it without any more, I would believe that I had sufficiently well compassed the end of a good Courtier."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "My Lord Octaviano," quoth he, "because you have much praised good bringing-up, and seemed, in a manner, to believe that it is the chief cause to make a man virtuous and good, I would know whether the Courtier's instructing of his prince ought to begin first of use and, as it were, daily fashions, that unawares to him may make him to accustom himself to well doing, or else whether he ought to begin it himself in opening unto him with reason the property of good and ill, and in making him to perceive, before he take the matter in hand, which is the good way and to be followed, and which the ill and to be shunned; finally, whether into that mind of his the virtues ought to be driven and grounded with reason and understanding first, or with custom."

The Lord Octaviano said: "You bring me into overlong a discourse. Yet because you shall not think that I will slack for that I am not willing to make answer to your requests, I say, that like as the soul and the

body in us are two things, so is the soul divided into two parts; whereof the one hath in it reason, and the other appetite. Even as therefore in generation the body goeth before the soul, so doth the unreasonable part of the soul go before the reasonable; the which is plainly to be discerned in young babes, who, in a manner, immediately after their birth utter angry and fervent appetite, but afterward in process of time reason appeareth. Therefore first must the body be cherished before the soul, after that, the appetite before reason; but the cherishing of the body for a respect to the soul and of the appetite for a respect to reason. For as the virtue of the mind is made perfect with learning, so is the civil with custom. Therefore ought there to be a ground made first with custom, which may govern the appetites not yet apt to conceive reason, and with that good use lead them to goodness; afterward settle them with understanding, the which, although she be last to show her light, yet doth she the more perfectly make the virtues to be enjoyed of whoso hath his mind well instructed with manners, wherein, in mine opinion, consisteth the whole."

The Lord Gaspar said: "Before you proceed any farther, I would know how the body should be cherished; because you have said that we must cherish it before the soul."

The Lord Octaviano answered, smiling: "Know of these men that make much of it and are fair and round; as for mine, as you see, it is not half well cherished. Yet may there also be much said in this behalf: as the time meet for marriage, that children be neither too nigh nor too far off from the father's age; exercises, and bringing up soon after their birth, and in the rest of

their life to make them handsome, towardly, and lively."

The Lord Gaspar answered: "The thing that would best please women to make their children handsome and well favored, in my mind, were the fellowship that Plato will have of them in his commonweal, and in that wise."

Then the Lady Emilia, smiling: "It is not in the covenant," quoth she, "that you should afresh fall to speak ill of women."

"I suppose," answered the Lord Gaspar, "that I give them a great praise in saying that they should desire to have a custom brought up which is allowed of so worthy a man."

The Lord Cesare Gonzaga said, laughing: "Let us see whether among the Lord Octaviano's lessons (yet I wot not whether he hath spoken all or no) this may take place; and whether it were well done the prince should establish it for a law or no."

"The few that I have spoken," answered the Lord Octaviano, "may perhaps be enough to make a good prince as princes go nowadays. Although, if a man would go more narrowly to work in the matter, there were much more for him yet to say."

Then said the Duchess: "Since it costeth us nothing but words, show us of good fellowship that which would come in your mind to teach your prince."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "Many other matters I would teach him, Madam, if I knew them myself, and among the rest, that he should pick out a certain number of gentlemen among his subjects, of the noblest and wisest, with whom he should debate all matters, and give them authority and free leave to utter their mind frankly unto him without respect; and take such order with them that they may well perceive that in every-

thing he would know the truth and abhor lying. And besides this council of the nobility, I would persuade him to choose out others among the people of a baser degree, of whom he should make an honest substantial council, that should debate with the council of the nobility the affairs of the city belonging to the common and private estate. And in this wise should be made, of the prince as of the head, of the nobility and commons, as of the members, one body alone knit together, the governance whereof should chiefly depend upon the prince, yet should the rest bear a stroke also in it; and so should this State have the form and manner of the three good governments, which is, a kingdom, men of the best sort, and the people. Afterward I would show him, that of cares belonging to a prince the chiefest is of justice; for maintenance whereof wise and well tried men should be chosen out for officers, whose wisdom were very wisdom indeed, accompanied with goodness, for else is it no wisdom, but craft. And where there is a want of this goodness, always the art and subtle practice of lawyers is nothing else but the utter decay and destruction of the laws and judgments; and the fault of every offense of theirs is to be laid in him that put them in office. I would tell him how that of justice also dependeth the zeal toward God, which belongeth unto all men, and especially to princes, who ought to love Him above all things, and to direct all their doings unto him, as unto the true end, and, as Xenophon saith, to honor and love Him always, but much more in prosperity, because they may afterward lawfully with a more confidence call to Him for assistance when they be in any adversity; for it is not possible to govern either himself or others well without the help of God, who unto the good sendeth

otherwhile good fortune for his minister, to help them out of great dangers, sometime adversity lest they should slumber so much in prosperity that they might happen to forget Him, or the wisdom of man, which many times redresseth ill fortune, as a good player the ill chances of the dice with cunning play at tables.

"I would not forget, also, to put the prince in mind to be devout in deed, not superstitious, nor given to the vanity of necromancy and prophecies; for in case he have accompanied with the wisdom of man a Godly zeal and true religion, he shall also have good luck, and God his defender, Who will always increase his prosperity both in peace and in war. Besides, I would declare unto him how he should love his country and his people, keeping them not in too much bondage for being hated of them, whereof arise seditions, conspiracies, and a thousand mischiefs beside; nor yet in too much liberty, lest he be set at naught, whereof proceedeth the licentious and riotous living of the people—theft, robbery, and murder, without any fear of laws, oftentimes the decay and utter destruction of cities and kingdoms. Moreover, how he should love them that be highest to him from one degree to another, observing among them all in certain matters a like equality, as in justice and liberty, and in some matters a reasonable partiality, as in being liberal, in recompensing, in bestowing promotions and honors according to the unequalness of deserts, which ought not always to exceed, but to be exceeded with recompenses. And that in thus doing he should not only be beloved, but, in a manner, worshiped of his subjects; neither should he need to commit the guard of his person to strangers, for his own, for the better safeguard and profit of themselves, would guard him

with their own person; and each man would willingly obey the laws when they should see him to obey them himself, and be, as it were, an uncorrupted keeper and minister of them; and so shall he make all men to conceive such an assured confidence of him, that if he should happen otherwhile to go beyond them in any point, every one would know it were done for a good intent. The selfsame respect and reverence they would have to his will as they have to the laws. And thus should the citizens' mind be tempered in such sort that the good would not seek for more than is requisite, and the bad should not perish; because many times abundance of wealth is cause of great destruction, as in poor Italy, which hath been, and still is, a prey and booty in the teeth of strange nations, as well for the ill government as for the abundance of riches that is in it. Therefore the best way were, to have the greater part of the citizens neither very wealthy nor very poor; because the overwealthy many times were stiffnecked and reckless, the poor desperate and picking. But the mean sort lie not in wait for others, and live with a quiet mind that none lie in wait for them. And where this mean sort are the greater number, they are withal the mightier. And therefore neither the poor nor the rich can work any conspiracy against the prince, or against others, nor move sedition. Wherefore, to avoid this evil, the most surest way is universally to maintain a mean.

"I would counsel him therefore to use these and many other remedies for the purpose, that in the mind of the subject there spring not a longing after new matters and alteration of state, which most commonly they do, either for gain, or else for promotion that they hope upon, or for loss, or else for some toil that they be afraid of. And

these stirs in their minds be engendered some time of hatred and despite that maketh them desperate for the wrongs and the unshameful dealing that they receive through the covetousness, pride and cruelty, or unlawful lust of the higher powers, otherwhile of a contempt and little regard that raiseth in them through the negligence and ill handling and lack of foresight in princes. And these two faults must be prevented with purchasing him the love of the people, and authority, which is done in rewarding and promoting the good, and in finding wisely a remedy, and sometime with rigor, that the evil and seditious wax not great; the which thing is easier to be stopped before they come to it, than to pluck them down again after they are once on loft. And I would say, to restrain the people from running into those inconveniences, there is no better way than to keep them from ill customs, and especially such as be put in use and creep in unawares by little and little, because they be secret infections that corrupt cities before a man can not only remedy them but spy them out. With such means I would counsel the prince to do his best to preserve his subjects in quiet estate, and to give them the goods of the mind and of the body and of fortune; but them of the body and fortune that they may exercise them of the mind, which, the greater and plentier they be, so much the more profitable be they; that happeneth not in them of the body, nor of fortune. In case, therefore, the subjects be good and of worthiness and well bent to the end of happiness, that prince shall be a very great lord; for that is a true and a great government under the which the subjects be good, well ruled and well commanded."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "I suppose," quoth he, "that

he should be but a small lord under whom the subjects were all good. For in every place there be but few good."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "In case some certain Circe should turn into wild beasts all the French King's subjects, would not you think him a small lord for all he reigned over so many thousand beasts? And contrarywise if only the cattle that scatter abroad, feeding about our mountains here, might become wise men, and valiant gentlemen, would not you think that herdmen that should govern them and have them obedient to them, of herdmen were become great lords? You may see, then, that not the multitude of subjects, but the worthiness of them makes princes great."

The Duchess, the Lady Emilia, and all the rest gave very diligent ear to the Lord Octaviano's talk for a good while together, but after he had here made a little stop, as if he had made an end of his talk, the Lord Cesare Gonzaga said: "Certes, my Lord Octaviano, it can not be said but your lessons be good and profitable; yet should I believe that if you instructed your prince with them, you deserved rather the name of a good schoolmaster than of a good Courtier; and he of a good governor rather than of a good prince. Yet my meaning is not but that the care of princes should be to have their people well ruled with justice and good usages, notwithstanding it may be sufficient for them, in my mind, to choose out good ministers to execute this kind of matters, but the very office of them is far higher. Therefore if I thought myself to be the excellent Courtier that these Lords have fashioned, and in my prince's favor, without peradventure I should never incline him to any vicious matter; but to attain unto the good end

you speak of, and the which I confirm ought to be the fruit of the Courtier's travails and doings, I would endeavor to put into his head a certain greatness, with that princely sumptuousness, and readiness of courage, and unconquered prowess in arms, that should make him beloved and reverenced of all men in such wise that for this in especial he should be famous and notable to the world. I would show him also that he ought to accompany with his greatness a familiar gentle behavior, with a soft and lovely kindness, and good cast to make much of his subjects and strangers discreetly, more and less according to their deserts, observing always notwithstanding the majesty meet for his degree, that should not in any point suffer him to diminish his authority through overmuch abasing, nor yet purchase him hatred through over-sour rigorousness; that he ought to be full of liberality, and sumptuous, and give unto every man without stint, for God, as they say, is the treasurer of freehearted princes; make gorgeous banquets, feasts, games, people pleasing shows, keep a great number of fair horses for profit in war and for pleasure in peace, hawks, hounds, and all other matters that belong to the contentation of great princes and the people. As in our days we have seen the Lord Francesco Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, do, which in these things seemeth rather King of all Italy than Lord over one city. I would assay also to bring him to make great buildings, both for his honor in life, and to give a memory of him to his posterity, as did Duke Federico in this noble palace, and now doth Pope Giuliano in the temple of Saint Peter's, and the way that goeth from the palace to his house of pleasure, Belvedere, and many other buildings, as also the ancient Romans did, whereof so

many remnants are to be seen about Rome, Naples, Pozzuolo, Baie, Civita Vecchia, and Porto, and also out of Italy, and so many other places, which be a great witness of the prowess of those divine courages. So did Alexander the Great in like manner, which, not satisfied with the fame that he got him worthily for subduing the world with martial prowess, built Alexandria in Egypt, Bucephalia in India, and other cities in other countries, and intended to bring the mountain Athos into the shape of a man, and in the left hand of him to build a very large city, and in the right a great bowl, into the which should gather all the rivers that ran from it, and thence should fall down toward the sea—a purpose in very deed princely and meet for the great Alexander. These things, think I, my Lord Octaviano, become a noble and a right prince, and shall make him both in peace and war most triumphant, and not put him in the head of such particular and small matters, and have a respect to take weapon in hand only to conquer and vanquish such as deserve to be conquered, or to profit his subjects withal, or to dispossess them that govern not as they ought. For in case the Romans, Alexander, Hannibal, and the rest, had had these respects, they should never have reached to the top of the glory they did."

The Lord Octaviano answered then, smiling: "Such as had not these respects should have done the better in case they had had them; although, if you consider well, you shall find that many had them, and especially those ancientest of old time, as Theseus and Hercules. And think not that Procrustes, Scyron, Caccus, Diomedes, Antheus and Gerion were any other than cruel and wicked tyrants, against whom these noble couraged

demigods kept continual and mortal war; and therefore, for ridding the world of such intolerable monsters (for tyrants ought not to be called by other name), unto Hercules were made temples and sacrifices and godly honors given him, because the benefit to root up tyrants is so profitable to the world that whoso doeth it deserveth a far greater reward than whatsoever is meet for a mortal man. And of them you have named, do you not think that Alexander did profit with his victories the vanquished, since he so traded those barbarous nations which he overcame, with such good manners, that of wild beasts he made them men? He built many beautiful cities in countries ill inhabited, planting therein civil kind of living, and, as it were, coupled Asia and Europe together with the bond of amity and holy laws, so that the vanquished by him were more happy than the rest, because among some he brought in matrimony; among other, husbandry; among other, religion; among other, not to slay, but to make much of their parents in their old age; and a thousand other matters that might be said for a witness of that profit which his victories brought to the world. But leaving aside them of old time, what enterprise were more noble, more glorious, and more profitable than if Christians would bend their force to conquer the infidels? Would you not think that this war, prosperously achieved, and being the cause of so many a thousand to be brought from the false sect of Mahomet to the light of the Christian truth, it should be a profit as well to the vanquished as to the subduers? And undoubtedly, as Themistocles in times past, being banished out of his country, and embraced of the King of Persia and made much of, and honored with infinite and most rich gifts, said unto his train:

'Oh, sirs, we had been undone had we not been undone,' even so might then the Turks and the Moors speak the very same with good cause, for that in their loss should consist their welfare. This happiness, therefore, I hope, we shall come to the sight of, if God grant so long life to Monseigneur d'Angoulême that he may come to the crown of France, who showeth such a hope of himself, as four nights ago the Lord Giuliano spake of. And to the crown of England the Lord Henry, Prince of Wales, who presently groweth under his most noble father in all kinds of virtue, like a tender imp under the shadow of an excellent tree and laden with fruit, to renew him much more beautiful and plenteous when time shall come; for as our Castilio writeth from thence, and promiseth at his return to tell us more at the full, a man can judge no less but that nature was willing in this Prince to show her cunning, planting in one body alone so many excellent virtues as were sufficient to deck out infinite."

Then said Messer Bernardo Bibbiena: "A very great hope of himself promiseth also the Lord Charles, Prince of Spain, who, not yet fully ten years of age, declareth now such a wit and so certain tokens of goodness, wisdom, modesty, noble courage and every virtue, that if the Empire of Christendom, as it is thought, come to his hands, it is to be reckoned upon that he will darken the name of many emperors of old time, and in renown be compared to the most famous that ever were in the world."

The Lord Octaviano proceeded: "I believe therefore that God hath sent such and so heavenly princes upon the earth, and made them one like another in youth, in mightiness of arms, in state, in handsomeness and dispo-

sition of person, that they may also be minded alike in this good purpose; and in case any manner envy or strife of matching others arise at any time among them, it shall be who shall be the first and most inclined and most courageous in so glorious an enterprise But let us leave this kind of talk, and return unto our own. Unto you, therefore, my Lord Cesare, I say, that such things as you would have the prince to do be very great and worthy much praise. But you must understand that if he be not skilful in that I have said he ought to have a knowledge in, and have not framed his mind in that wise, and bent it to the ways of virtue, it shall be hard for him to have the knowledge to be noble couraged, liberal, just, quick-spirited, wise, or to have any other of those qualities that belong unto him. Neither would I have him to be such a one for any other thing, but to have the understanding to put in use these conditions; for as they that build be not all good workmen, so they that give be not all liberal; for virtue never hurteth any man; and many there be that lay hands on other men's goods to give, and so are lavish of another man's substance. Some give to them they ought not, and leave in wretchedness and misery such as they be bound to. Other give with a certain ill will, and as it were, with a despite, so that it is known they do it because they can do none other. Other do not only not keep it secret, but they call witness of it, and, in a manner, cause their liberalities to be cried. Other foolishly at a sudden empty the fountain of liberality, so that afterward they can use it no more. Therefore in this point, as in all other matters, he must have a knowledge and govern himself with the wisdom that is a companion unto all the other virtues which, for that they are in

the middle, be nigh unto the two extremities that be vices. Wherefore he that hath not knowledge runneth soon into them. For as it is a hard matter in a circle to find out the point in the center, so it is hard to find out the point of virtue placed in the middle between two extreme vices—the one for the overmuch, and the other for the over-little—and unto these we are inclined sometime to the one, sometime to the other, and this is known by the pleasure and grief that is felt within us; for through the one we do the thing that we ought not, and through the other we leave undone that which we ought to do; although pleasure be much more dangerous, because our judgment is soon led by it to be corrupted. But because the perseverance how far a man is wide from the center of virtue is a hard matter, we ought by little and little to draw back of ourselves to the contrary part of this extremity, which we know we be inclined unto, as they do that make straight crooked staves; for by that mean we shall draw nigh into virtue, which is placed, as I have said, in that point of the mean; whereby it cometh that by many ways we be wide, and by one alone we do our office and duty; like as archers by one way alone hit the mark, and by many miss it. Therefore oftentimes a prince, to be gentle and lowly, doeth many things contrary to comeliness, and so humbleth himself that he is naught set by. Some other, to show a grave majesty with authority according, becometh cruel and intolerable. Some one, to be counted eloquent, entereth into a thousand strange matters and long processes with curious words giving ear to himself, so that other men can not for loathsomeness hear him.

"Therefore, my Lord Cesare, do you not call a small

matter anything that may better a prince, how small soever it be; nor think that I judge it to be in the reproof of my lessons where you say that a good governor were rather instructed therewithal than a good prince; for perhaps there can not be a greater praise nor more comely for a prince, than to call him a good governor. Therefore, if it should fall to my lot to instruct him, he should have a care not only to govern the matters already spoken of, but also far lesser, and understand in piecemeal whatsoever belongeth to his people as much as were possible, and never credit nor trust any officer so much as to give him the bridle wholly into his hands and the disposing of the whole government. For no man is most apt to all things. And much more hurt cometh of the light belief of princes, than of mistrusting, which otherwhile doth not only not hurt, but oftentimes profiteth exceedingly. Yet in this point a good judgment is very necessary in a prince, to discern who deserveth to be put in trust, and who not. I would he should have a care to understand the doings and to be an overseer of his officers and ministers. To break and to end controversies among his subjects. To take up matters between them, and to knit them together in alliance by marriage. To provide so that the city may be all joined together and agreeing in amity, like a private house, well peopled, not poor, quiet and full of good artificers. To show favor to merchantmen, and to help them also with stocks. To be liberal and honorable in housekeeping toward strangers and religious persons. To temper all superfluous matters, because through the offenses committed in these things, albeit they appear but small, cities many times fall in decay. Therefore it is reason that the prince set a stint to the over-sump-

tuous buildings of private men, banquetings, unmeasurable dowries of women, their riotous excess, their pomp in jewels and apparel, which is nothing else but a token of their folly; for, (besides that through ambition and malice that one of them beareth another, they many times lavish out their livelihood and husband's substance, otherwhile for some pretty jewel or other matter of fancy), sometime they sell their honesty to him that will buy it."

Then said Messer Bernardo Bibbiena, smiling: "You begin, my Lord Octaviano, to take my Lord Gaspar's and Frisio's part."

Then the Lord Octaviano answered in like manner, smiling: "The controversy is ended, and I intend not now to renew it. Therefore will I speak no more of women, but return to my prince."

Frisio answered: "You may now leave him hardly, and be contented to have him such a one as you have instructed him. For doubtless it were an easier matter to find out a woman of the qualities the Lord Giuliano hath spoken of, than a prince of the qualities that you would have in him. Therefore, I fear me, he is like the Commonweal of Plato, and we shall never see such a one, unless it be perhaps in heaven."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "Things possible, though they be hard, yet is it to be hoped that they may be; therefore may we yet perhaps see him upon the earth in our time. For although the heavens be so scant in bringing forth excellent princes, that in so many hundred years we do scantly see one, yet may this good luck happen to us."

Then said Count Lodovico: "I have a good hope of it. For besides the three great ones that we have named,

of whom may be hoped that belongeth to the high degree of a perfect prince, there be also nowadays in Italy certain princes' children, which, although they be not like to have such power, may hap will supply it with virtue; and he that among them all declareth a more towardness and promiseth of himself a greater hope than any of the rest, methink, is the Lord Federico Gonzaga, son and heir to the Marquess of Mantua and nephew to our Duchess here. For besides the honest inclination to good nurture and the discretion that he declareth in these tender years, they that have the bringing-up of him report such wondrous things, as touching his being witty, desirous of glory, stouthearted, courteous, freehearted, friendly to justice, so that of so good a beginning there can not be looked for but a very good end."

Then Frisio: "Well, no more of this," quoth he. "We will pray unto God that we may see this your hope fulfilled."

Here the Lord Octaviano, turning him toward the Duchess, after a sort as though he had ended as much as he had to say: "You have now heard, Madam," quoth he, "what I am able to say of the end of the Courtier, wherein, though I have not satisfied in all points, it shall suffice me yet that I have showed that some other perfection may be given him beside the matters which these Lords have spoken of, who, I believe, have left out both this and whatsoever I am able to say, not because they knew it not better than I, but because they were loath to take the pains. Therefore will I give them leave to go forward, if they have anything else left behind to be said."

Then said the Duchess: "Besides that it is late (for within a while it will be time for us to make an end for

this night), methink, we ought not to mingle any other talk with this, wherein you have gathered together such sundry and goodly matters that, concerning the end of courtliness, it may be said that you are not only the perfect Courtier whom we seek for, and able to instruct your prince well, but also, if fortune be so favorable on your side, you may be the good prince yourself, which should not be without great profit to your country."

Then laughed the Lord Octaviano and said: "Perhaps, Madam, were I in that estate, it would be with me as it is with many others that can better say well than do well."

Here, after a little debating of the matter to and fro among the company, with certain contentions tending to the commendation of that which had been spoken, and agreeing on all hands not yet to be bedtime, the Lord Giuliano said, smiling: "Madam, I am so very an enemy to craft and guile, that needs must I speak against the Lord Octaviano, who for that he is, as I much doubt him, a secret conspirator with the Lord Gaspar against women, hath overshot himself in committing of two errors, in mine opinion, very great; whereof the one is, that, meaning to prefer this Courtier before the Gentlewoman of the Palace, and to make him to pass these bounds that she is not able to reach to, he hath also preferred him before the prince, which is most unseemly. The other, that he hath given him such an end that it is evermore hard and otherwhile unpossible for him to come by it; and yet when he doth come by it, he ought not to have the name of a Courtier."

"I can not see," quoth the Lady Emilia, "how it is hard or unpossible for the Courtier to come by this his end, nor yet how the Lord Octaviano hath preferred him before the prince."

"Grant it him not," answered the Lord Octaviano; "for I have not preferred the Courtier before the prince. And as touching the end of courtliness, I dare undertake that I am not overseen in any point."

Then answered the Lord Giuliano: "You can not say, my Lord Octaviano, that always the cause by the which the effect is such as it is, is no more such as the effect is. Therefore needs must the Courtier, by whose instruction the prince must be of such an excellency, be more excellent than the prince; and in this wise shall he be also of a more worthiness than the prince himself, which is most unsitting. Then concerning the end of courtliness, that which you have spoken may follow when there is little between the age of the prince and the Courtier's; yet very hardly, for where there is small difference of age, it is likely there is also small difference of knowledge. But in case the prince be old and the Courtier young, it is meet that the old prince know more than the young Courtier, and where this followeth not always, it followeth sometime, and then is the end which you have appointed to the Courtier unpossible. In case, again, the prince be young and the Courtier aged, much ado shall the Courtier have to win him the good will of the prince with those qualities that you have given him. For, to say the truth, feats of arms and the other exercises belong unto young men, and be not comely in age; and music, dancing, feasting, sportings and love, are matters to be laughed at in old men, and methink to an instructor of the life and manners of a prince, who ought to be a grave person and of authority, ripe in years and experience and, if it were possible, a good philosopher, a good captain, and to have the knowledge almost of everything, they are most

unseemly. Wherefore he that instructeth a prince, I believe, ought not to be called a Courtier, but deserveth a far greater and a more honorable name. Therefore, my Lord Octaviano, pardon me in case I have opened this your crafty conveyance, which I think myself bound to do for the honor of my woman, whom you would have to be of less worthiness than this Courtier of yours, and I will none of that."

The Lord Octaviano laughed, and said: "A more praise it were for the Gentlewoman of the Palace, my Lord Giuliano, to exalt her so much that she may be equal with the Courtier, than so much to debase the Courtier that he should be equal with the Gentlewoman of the Palace; for it were not unfit for the woman also to instruct her lady, and with her to draw to the same end of courtliness, which I have said is meet for the Courtier with his prince. But you seek more to dispraise the Courtier than to praise the Gentlewoman of the Palace; therefore shall it become me also to take part with the Courtier. To make you answer to your objections, you shall understand that I have not said that the instruction of the Courtier ought to be the only cause why the prince should be such a one, for in case he be not inclined of nature and apt to be such a one, all diligence and exhortation of the Courtier were in vain. As in like manner every good husbandman should labor in vain, that would take in hand to till and sow with good grain the barren sand of the sea, because this barrenness in that place is natural. But when to the good seed in a fruitful soil, with the temperateness of air and rain meet for the season of the year, there is also applied the diligence of man's husbanding the ground, always great abundance of corn is seen to spring

plenteously; yet for all this is it not to be said that the husbandman alone is the cause of it, although without him all the other things do little or nothing to help the purpose. There be, therefore, many princes that would be good, in case their minds were well tilled, and of them speak I, not of such as be like the barren country, and of nature so far wide from good conditions that no teaching were able to frame their mind to a right trade. And forsomuch as, as we have already said, such customs and properties be engendered in us as our doings are, and virtue consisteth in doing and practice, it is not unpossible, nor any marvel, that the Courtier should train his prince in many virtues, as justice, liberality, noble courage, the practicing whereof he, through his greatness, may lightly put in use and make it custom, which the Courtier can not do, because he hath no means to practice them; and thus the prince inclined to virtue by the Courtier, may become more virtuous than the Courtier; beside that you must conceive that the whetstone, which cutteth not a whit, doth yet make a tool sharp; therefore, although the Courtier instructeth his prince, yet methink it is not to be said that he is of a more worthiness than his prince.

"That the end of this Courtier is hard and sometime unpossible, and that when the Courtier doth come by it he ought not to be named a Courtier, but deserveth a greater name, I tell you plainly that I deny not this hardness, because it is no less hard to find out so excellent a Courtier than to come by such an end. Yet by reason methink the unpossibleness of the matter lieth not in the point that you have alleged. For in case the Courtier be so young that he hath not understanding in the thing which he ought to have a knowledge in, it is

not to the purpose to speak of him, because he is not the Courtier that we entreat upon, neither is it possible for him that must have a sight in so many things to be very young. And if it happen, moreover, the prince to be so wise and good of himself that he needeth no exhortations or counsel of others, although it be so hard a matter as every man knoweth, it sufficeth that the Courtier be such a one as, if his prince had need, he could make him virtuous; and then may he in effect fulfil the other part, not to suffer him to be deceived, and to work that evermore he may understand the truth of everything, and bolster him against flatterers and railers and all such as should endeavor to corrupt his mind with unhonest delights. And in this wise shall he yet come by a part of his end though he can not practice the whole, which can not be justly laid to him for a fault, since he refraineth the doing of it upon so good a ground. For were an excellent physician in place where all were sound and in health, a man ought not therefore to say that the physician, although he cured no diseased, wanted of his end. Wherefore as the physician's respect ought to be the health of men, even so the Courtier's the virtue of his prince; and it sufficeth them both to have this end inwardly graft in them, when the want of uttering it outwardly in practice is occasioned by the subject to the which this end is directed.

"But in case the Courtier were so old that it became him not to be doing in music, feastings, sportings, martial feats, and the other sleights of the body, yet can it not be said, notwithstanding, that it were unpossible for him to enter that way in favor with his prince; for where his age taketh away the practicing of those things, it taketh not away the understanding of them,

and if he have practiced them in his youth, it maketh him to have so much the more perfect judgment in them, and giveth a knowledge to teach them his prince so much the more perfectly, as years and experience bring knowledge of all things with them. And thus shall the aged Courtier, although he exercise not the qualities he is endowed withal, come by his end at last, to instruct well his prince. And in case you will not call him a Courtier, it shall nothing offend me; for nature hath not appointed such narrow bounds to the dignities of men, that one may not come up from one to another. Therefore many times mean soldiers arise to be captains; private men, kings; priests, popes; and scholars, masters; and so with their degree or dignity they take their name accordingly. Wherefore perhaps a man may say that to become the instructor of a prince were the end of a Courtier, although I perceive not who should refuse this name of a perfect Courtier, which, in my mind, is worthy very great praise. And I can not see but Homer, as he fashioned two most excellent personages for example of man's life, the one in practices (which was Achilles), the other in passions and sufferances (which was Ulysses), even so in like manner he minded to fashion a perfect Courtier (which was Phœnix), who after rehearsal of his loves and many other matters of youth, declareth that he was sent to Achilles by his father Peleus, to be in his company and to teach him to speak and to do; which is nothing else but the end we have appointed for our Courtier. Neither can I think that Aristotle and Plato took scorn of the name of a perfect Courtier, because it is plainly to be seen that they practiced the deeds of courtiership and gave themselves to this end, the one with the great

Alexander, the other with the kings of Sicily. And because it is the office of a good Courtier to know the nature and inclination of his prince, and so according to the business and as occasion serveth with sleightness to enter into favor with him, as we have said, by those ways that make him a sure entry, and afterward bend him to virtue, Aristotle so well knew the nature of Alexander, and with sleightness framed himself so well thereafter, that he was beloved and honored of him more than a father. Wherefore among many other tokens that Alexander showed him, for a witness of his good will, he caused Stagyra, the city where he was born, once destroyed, to be builded new again, and Aristotle, besides the directing him to that glorious end that was to make the world only a general country, and all men as one people that should live in amity and agreement together, under one government and one law, that, like the sun, should generally give light to all, he instructed him in the natural sciences and in the virtues of the mind full and wholly, that he made him most wise, most manly, most continent, and a true moral philosopher, not in words only, but in deeds. For there can not be imagined a more noble philosophy than to bring to a civil trade of living such wild people as were the inhabitants of Bactria and Caucasus, India and Scythia, and to teach them matrimony, husbandry, to honor their fathers, to abstain from robbing and killing as well as from other naughty conditions, and to build so many most noble cities in strange countries, so that infinite through those laws were brought from a wild life to live like men. And of these things in Alexander the author was Aristotle in practicing the ways of a good Courtier. The which Calisthenes could not do, for all Aristotle showed

him the way of it, who, because he was a right philosopher and so sharp a minister of the bare truth without mingling it with courtliness, lost his life and profited not, but rather gave a slander to Alexander. With the very same way of courtliness Plato framed Dion the Syracusan. But when he met afterward with Dionysius the tyrant, like a book all full of faults and errors, and rather needful to be clean blotted out than altered or corrected, because it was not possible to scrape out of him that blot of tyranny wherewithal he was stained so long together, he would not practice therein the ways of courtiership, for he thought they should be all in vain; the which our Courtier ought to do also, if his chance be to serve a prince of so ill a nature that by long custom is grown in use with vices, as they that have consumption of the lungs with their disease. For in this case he ought to forsake his service, lest he bear the blame of his lord's ill practices, or feel the heart grief that all good men have which serve the wicked."

Here, when the Lord Octaviano had made a stay, the Lord Gaspar said: "I had not thought our Courtier had been so worthy a personage. But since Aristotle and Plato be his mates, I judge no man ought to disdain this name any more. Yet wot I not whether I may believe that Aristotle and Plato ever danced or were musicians in all their lifetime, or practiced other feats of chivalry."

The Lord Octaviano answered: "Almost it is not lawful to think that these two divine wits were not skilful in everything, and therefore it is to to be presupposed that they practiced whatever belongeth to courtliness. For where it cometh to purpose they so pen the matter that the very craft's masters themselves know by their

writings that they understood the whole, even to the pith and innermost roots. Wherefore to a Courtier or instructor of a prince (however you lust to term him) that tendeth to the good end, which we have spoken of, it is not to be said but that all the good qualities which these Lords have given him do belong, though he were never so grave a philosopher or holy in his manners; because they strive not against goodness, discretion, knowledge and will, in all age and in all time and place."

Then the Lord Gaspar: "I remember," quoth he, "that these Lords' yesternight reasoning of the Courtier's qualities did allow him to be a lover; and in making rehearsal of as much as hitherto hath been spoken, a man may pick out a conclusion: That the Courtier (which with his worthiness and credit must incline his prince to virtue) must in manner of necessity be aged, for knowledge cometh very seldom time before years, and specially in matters that be learned with experience. I can not see, when he is well drawn in years, how it will stand well with him to be a lover, considering, as it hath been said the other night, love frameth not with old men, and the tricks that in young men be gallantness, courtesy and preciseness so acceptable to women, in them are mere follies and fondness to be laughed at, and purchase him that useth them hatred of women and mocks of others. Therefore, in case this your Aristotle, an old Courtier, were a lover and practiced the feats that young lovers do, as some that we have seen in our days, I fear me he would forget to teach his prince; and peradventure boys would mock him behind his back, and women would have none other delight in him but to make him a jesting-stock."

Then said the Lord Octaviano: "Since all the other

qualities appointed to the Courtier are meet for him, although he be old, methink we should not then bar him from this happiness to love."

"Nay rather," quoth the Lord Gaspar, "to take this love from him is a perfection over and above, and a making him to live happily out of misery and wretchedness."

Messer Pietro Bembo said: "Remember you not, my Lord Gaspar, that the Lord Octaviano declared the other night in his device of pastimes, although he be not skilful in love, to know yet that there be some lovers which reckon the disdains, the angers, the debates and torments which they receive of their ladies, sweet? Whereupon he required to be taught the cause of this sweetness. Therefore, in case our Courtier, though he be old, were kindled with those loves that be sweet without any bitter smack, he should feel no misery nor wretchedness at all. And being wise, as we set case he is, he should not be deceived in thinking to be meet for him whatsoever were meet for young men, but in loving should perhaps love after a sort that might not only not bring him in slander, but to much praise and great happiness, without any loathsomeness at all, the which very seldom or in manner never happeneth to young men; and so should he neither lay aside the teaching of his prince, nor yet commit anything that should deserve the mocking of boys."

Then spake the Duchess: "I am glad, Messer Pietro, that you have not been much troubled in our reasonings this night, for now we may be the bolder to give you in charge to speak, and to teach the Courtier this so happy a love, which bringeth with it neither slander nor any inconvenience; for perhaps it shall be one of the neces-

sariest and profitablest qualities that hitherto hath been given him; therefore speak of good fellowship as much as you know therein."

Messer Pietro laughed and said: "I would be loath, Madam, where I say it is lawful for old men to love, it should be an occasion for these ladies to think me old; therefore hardly give you this enterprise to another."

The Duchess answered: "You ought not to refuse to be counted old in knowledge, though you be young in years. Therefore say on, and excuse yourself no more."

And here, after they had laughed a while, Messer Pietro proceeded: "I say, therefore, that according as it is defined of the wise men of old time, love is nothing else but a certain coveting to enjoy beauty; and forsomuch as coveting longeth for nothing but for things known, it is requisite that knowledge go evermore before coveting, which of his own nature willeth the good, but of himself is blind, and knoweth it not. Therefore hath Nature so ordained that to every virtue of knowledge there is annexed a virtue of longing. And because in our soul there be three manner ways to know, namely, by sense, reason, and understanding: of sense ariseth appetite or longing, which is common to us with brute beasts; of reason ariseth election or choice, which is proper to man; of understanding, by the which man may be partner with angels, ariseth will. Even as therefore the sense knoweth not but sensible matters and that which may be felt, so the appetite or coveting only desireth the same; and even as the understanding is bent but to behold things that may be understood, so is that will only fed with spiritual goods. Man of nature endowed with reason, placed, as it were, in the middle between these two extremities, may, through his choice

inclining to sense or reaching to understanding, come nigh to the coveting, sometime of the one, sometime of the other part. In these sorts therefore may beauty be coveted, the general name whereof may be applied to all things, either natural or artificial, that are framed in good proportion and due temper, as their nature beareth. But speaking of the beauty that we mean, which is only it that appeareth in bodies, and especially in the face of man, and moveth this fervent coveting which we call love, we will term it an influence of the heavenly bountifulness, the which for all it stretcheth over all things that be created (like the light of the Sun), yet when it findeth out a face well proportioned, and framed with a certain lively agreement of several colors, and set forth with lights and shadows, and with an orderly distance and limits of lines, thereinto it distileth itself and appeareth most well favored, and decketh out and lighteneth the subject where it shineth with a marvelous grace and glistering, like the sunbeams that strike against beautiful plate of fine gold wrought and set with precious jewels, so that it draweth unto it men's eyes with pleasure, and piercing through them imprinteth himself in the soul, and with an unwonted sweetness all to stirreth her and delighteth, and setting her on fire maketh her to covet him. When the soul then is taken with coveting to enjoy this beauty as a good thing, in case she suffer herself to be guided with the judgment of sense, she falleth into most deep errors, and judgeth the body in which beauty is discerned, to be the principal cause thereof; whereupon to enjoy it she reckoneth it necessary to join as inwardly as she can with that body, which is false; and therefore whoso thinketh in possessing the body to enjoy beauty, he is far deceived, and is

moved to it, not with true knowledge by the choice of reason, but with false opinion by the longing of sense. Whereupon the pleasure that followeth it is also false and of necessity full of errors."

Here Bembo paused a while, and when all things were whist Messer Morello, of Ortona, said: "And in case there were some old man more fresh and lusty and of a better complexion than many young men, why would you not have it lawful for him to love with the love that young men love?"

The Duchess laughed, and said: "If the love of young men be so unlucky, why would you, Messer Morello, that old men should also love with this unluckiness? But in case you were old, as these men say you be, you would not thus procure the hurt of old men."

Messer Morello answered: "The hurt of old men, meseemeth, Messer Pietro Bembo procureth, who will have them to love after a sort that I for my part understand not; and, methink, the possessing of this beauty which he praiseth so much, without the body, is a dream."

"Do you believe, Messer Morello," quoth then Count Lodovico, 'that beauty is always so good a thing as Messer Pietro Bembo speaketh of?"

"Not I, in good sooth," answered Messer Morello. "But I remember rather that I have seen many beautiful women of a most ill inclination, cruel and spiteful, and it seemeth that, in a manner, it happeneth always so, for beauty maketh them proud; and pride, cruel."

Count Lodovico said, smiling: "To you perhaps they seem cruel, because they content you not with that which you would have. But cause Messer Pietro Bembo to teach you in what sort old men ought to covet beauty,

and what to seek at their ladies' hands, and what to content themselves withal; and in not passing out of these bounds you shall see that they shall be neither proud nor cruel, and will satisfy you with what you shall require."

Messer Morello seemed then somewhat out of patience, and said: "I will not know the thing that toucheth me not. But cause you to be taught how the young men ought to covet this beauty that are not so fresh and lusty as old men be."

Here Sir Federico, to pacify Messer Morello and to break their talk, would not suffer Count Lodovico to make answer, but interrupting him said: "Perhaps Messer Morello is not altogether out of the way in saying that beauty is not always good, for the beauty of women is many times cause of infinite evils in the world—hatred, war, mortality, and destruction, whereof the razing of Troy can be a good witness; and beautiful women for the most part be either proud and cruel, as is said, or unchaste; but Messer Morello would find no fault with that. There be also many wicked men that have the comeliness of a beautiful countenance, and it seemeth that Nature hath so shaped them because they may be the readier to deceive, and that their amiable look were like a bait that covereth the hook."

Then Messer Pietro Bembo: "Believe not," quoth he, "but beauty is always good."

Here Count Lodovico, because he would return again to his former purpose, interrupted him and said: "Since Messer Morello passeth not to understand that which is so necessary for him, teach it me, and show me how old men may come by this happiness of love, for I will not care to be counted old, so it may profit me."

Messer Pietro Bembo laughed, and said: "First will I take the error out of these gentlemen's mind, and afterward will I satisfy you also. So beginning afresh: "My Lords," quoth he, "I would not that with speaking ill of beauty, which is a holy thing, any of us as profane and wicked should purchase him the wrath of God. Therefore, to give Messer Morello and Sir Federico warning, that they lose not their sight, as Stesichorus did—a pain most meet for whoso dispraiseth beauty—I say that beauty cometh of God and is like a circle, the goodness whereof is the center. And therefore, as there can be no circle without a center, no more can beauty be without goodness. Whereupon doth very seldom an ill soul dwell in a beautiful body. And therefore is the outward beauty a true sign of the inward goodness, and in bodies this comeliness is imprinted, as it were, for a mark of the soul, whereby she is outwardly known; as in trees, in which the beauty of the buds giveth a testimony of the goodness of the fruit. And the very same happeneth in bodies, as it is seen that palmisters by the visage know many times the conditions and otherwhile the thoughts of men. And, which is more, in beasts also a man may discern by the face the quality of the courage, which in the body declareth itself as much as it can. Judge you how plainly in the face of a lion, a horse, and an eagle, a man shall discern anger, fierceness, and stoutness; in lambs and doves, simpleness and very innocency; the crafty subtlety in foxes and wolves, and the like, in a manner, in all other living creatures. The foul therefore for the most part be also evil, and the beautiful good. Therefore it may be said that beauty is a face pleasant, merry, comely, and to be desired for goodness; and foulness a face dark, uglesome, un-

pleasant and to be shunned for ill. And in case you will consider all things, you shall find that whatsoever is good and profitable hath also evermore the comeliness of beauty. Behold the state of this great engine of the world, which God created for the health and preservation of everything that was made: The heaven round beset with so many heavenly lights; and in the middle the Earth environed with the elements and upheld with the very weight of itself—the Sun, that compassing about, giveth light to the whole, and in winter season draweth to the lowermost sign, afterward by little and little climbeth again to the other part; the Moon, that of him taketh her light, according as she draweth nigh, or goeth farther from him; and the other five stars that diversely keep the very same course. These things among themselves have such force by the knitting together of an order so necessarily framed that, with altering them any one jot, they should all be loosed and the world would decay. They have also such beauty and comeliness that all the wits men have can not imagine a more beautiful matter.

"Think now of the shape of man, which may be called a little world, in whom every parcel of his body is seen to be necessarily framed by art and not by hap, and then the form altogether most beautiful, so that it were a hard matter to judge whether the members—as the eyes, the nose, the mouth, the ears, the arms, the breast, and in like manner the other parts—give either more profit to the countenance and the rest of the body or comeliness. The like may be said of all other living creatures. Behold the feathers of fowls, the leaves and boughs of trees, which be given them of Nature to keep them in their being, and yet have they withal a very

great sightliness. Leave Nature, and come to art. What thing is so necessary in sailing vessels as the forepart, the sides, the mainyards, the mast, the sails, the stern, oars, anchors, and tacklings? All these things notwithstanding are so wellfavored in the eye that unto whoso beholdeth them they seem to have been found out as well for pleasure as for profit. Pillars and great beams uphold high buildings and palaces, and yet are they no less pleasureful unto the eyes of the beholders than profitable to the buildings. When men began to build, in the middle of temples and houses they reared the ridge of the roof, not to make the works to have a better show, but because the water might the more commodiously avoid on both sides; yet unto profit there was forthwith adjoined a fair sightliness, so that if, under the sky where falleth neither hail nor rain, a man should build a temple without a reared ridge, it is to be thought that it could have neither a sightly show nor any beauty. Besides other things, therefore, it giveth a great praise to the world in saying that it is beautiful. It is praised in saying the beautiful heaven, beautiful earth, beautiful sea, beautiful rivers, beautiful woods, trees, gardens, beautiful cities, beautiful churches, houses, armies. In conclusion, this comely and holy beauty is a wondrous setting out of everything. And it may be said that good and beautiful be after a sort one self thing, especially in the bodies of men; of the beauty whereof the nighest cause, I suppose, is the beauty of the soul; the which, as a partner of the right and heavenly beauty, maketh sightly and beautiful whatever she toucheth, and most of all, if the body, where she dwelleth, be not of so vile a matter that she can not imprint in it her property. Therefore beauty is the true monument and spoil of the

victory of the soul, when she with heavenly influence beareth rule over material and gross nature, and with her light overcometh the darkness of the body. It is not, then, to be spoken that beauty maketh women proud or cruel, although it seem so to Messer Morello. Neither yet ought beautiful women to bear the blame of that hatred, mortality, and destruction which the unbridled appetites of men are the cause of. I will not now deny that it is possible also to find in the world beautiful women unchaste; yet not because beauty inclineth them to unchaste living, for it rather plucketh them from it, and leadeth them into the way of virtuous conditions, through the affinity that beauty hath with goodness; but otherwhile ill bringing up, the continual provocations of lovers' tokens, poverty, hope, deceits, fear, and a thousand other matters, overcome the steadfastness, yea, of beautiful and good women; and for these and like causes may also beautiful men become wicked."

Then said the Lord Cesare: "In case the Lord Gaspar's saying be true of yesternight, there is no doubt but the fair women be more chaste then the foul."

"And what was my saying?" quoth the Lord Gaspar.

The Lord Cesare answered: "If I do well bear in mind, your saying was, that the women that are sued to always refuse to satisfy him that sueth to them, but those that are not sued to sue to others. There is no doubt but the beautiful women have always more suitors, and be more instantly laid at in love, than the foul. Therefore the beautiful always deny, and consequently be more chaste than the foul, which, not being sued to, sue unto others."

Messer Pietro Bembo laughed, and said: "This argument can not be answered to."

Afterward he proceeded: "It chanceth also, oftentimes, that as the other senses, so the sight is deceived and judgeth a face beautiful which indeed is not beautiful. And because in the eyes and in the whole countenance of some woman a man beholdeth otherwhile a certain lavish wantonness painted, with dishonest flickerings, many, whom that manner delighteth because it promiseth them an easiness to come by the thing that they covet, call it beauty; but indeed it is a cloaked unshamefastness, unworthy of so honorable and holy a name."

Messer Pietro Bembo held his peace, but those Lords still were earnest upon him to speak somewhat more of this love and of the way to enjoy beauty aright, and at the last: "Methink," quoth he, "I have showed plainly enough that old men may love more happily than young, which was my drift, therefore it belongeth not to me to enter any farther."

Count Lodovico answered: "You have better declared the unluckiness of young men than the happiness of old men, whom you have not as yet taught what way they must follow in this love of theirs; only you have said that they must suffer themselves to be guided by reason, and the opinion of many is, that it is unpossible for love to stand with reason."

Bembo notwithstanding sought to make an end of reasoning, but the Duchess desired him to say on, and he began thus afresh: "Too unlucky were the nature of man, if our soul, in which this so fervent coveting may lightly arise, should be driven to nourish it with that only which is common to her with beasts, and could not turn it to the other noble part, which is proper to her. Therefore, since it is so your pleasure, I will

not refuse to reason upon this noble matter. And because I know myself unworthy to talk of the most holy mysteries of Love, I beseech him to lead my thought and my tongue so that I may show this excellent Courtier how to love contrary to the wonted manner of the common ignorant sort. And even as from my childhood I have dedicated all my whole life unto him, so also now that my words may be answerable to the same intent, and to the praise of him: I say, therefore, that since the nature of man in youthful age is so much inclined to sense, it may be granted the Courtier, while he is young, to love sensually; but in case afterward also, in his riper years, he chance to be set on fire with this coveting of love, he ought to be good and circumspect, and heedful that he beguile not himself to be led wilfully into the wretchedness that in young men deserveth more to be pitied than blamed; and contrarywise in old men, more to be blamed than pitied. Therefore when an amiable countenance of a beautiful woman cometh in his sight, that is accompanied with noble conditions and honest behaviors, so that, as one practised in love, he wotteth well that his hue hath an agreement with hers, as soon as he is aware that his eyes snatch that image and carry it to the heart, and that the soul beginneth to behold it with pleasure, and feeleth within herself the influence that stirreth her and by little and little setteth her in heat, and that those lively little spirits that twinkle out through the eyes put continually fresh nourishment to the fire, he ought in this beginning to seek a speedy remedy and to raise up reason, and with her to fence the fortress of his heart, and to shut in such wise the passages against sense and appetites that they may enter neither with force nor subtle practice.

Thus, if the flame be quenched, the jeopardy is also quenched. But in case it continue or increase, then must the Courtier determine, when he perceiveth he is taken, to shun thoroughly all filthiness of common love, and so enter into the holy way of love with the guide of reason, and first consider that the body where that beauty shineth is not the fountain whence beauty springeth, but rather because beauty is bodiless and, as we have said, an heavenly shining beam, she loseth much of her honor when she is coupled with that vile subject and full of corruption, because the less she is partner thereof, the more perfect she is, and, clean sundered from it, is most perfect. And as a man heareth not with his mouth, nor smelleth with his ears, no more can he also in any manner wise enjoy beauty, nor satisfy the desire that she stirreth up in our minds, with feeling, but with the sense, unto whom beauty is the very butt to level at, namely, the virtue of seeing. Let him lay aside, therefore, the blind judgment of the sense, and enjoy with his eyes the brightness, the comeliness, the loving sparkles, laughters, gestures, and all the other pleasant furnitures of beauty, especially with hearing the sweetness of her voice, the tunableness of her words, the melody of her singing and playing on instruments (in case the woman beloved be a musician), and so shall he with the most dainty food feed the soul through the means of these two senses which have little bodily substance in them and be the ministers of reason, without entering farther toward the body with coveting unto any longing otherwise than honest. Afterward let him obey, please, and honor with all reverence his woman, and reckon her more dear to him than his own life, and prefer all her commodities and pleasures before his own,

and love no less in her the beauty of the mind than of the body. Therefore let him have a care not to suffer her to run into any error, but with lessons and good exhortations seek always to frame her to modesty, to temperance, to true honesty, and so to work that there may never take place in her other than pure thoughts and far wide from all filthiness of vices. And thus in sowing of virtue in the garden of that mind, he shall also gather the fruits of most beautiful conditions, and savor them with a marvelous good relish. And this shall be the right engendering and imprinting of beauty in beauty, the which some hold opinion to be the end of love. In this manner shall our Courtier be most acceptable to his lady, and she will always show herself toward him tractable, lowly, and sweet in language, and as willing to please him as to be beloved of him; and the wills of them both shall be most honest and agreeable, and they consequently shall be most happy."

Here Messer Morello: "The engendering," quoth he, "of beauty in beauty aright were the engendering of a beautiful child in a beautiful woman; and I would think it a more manifest token a great deal that she loved her lover, if she pleased him with this than with the sweetness of language that you speak of."

Messer Pietro Bembo laughed, and said: "You must not, Messer Morello, pass your bounds. I may tell you it is not a small token that a woman loveth when she giveth unto her lover her beauty, which is so precious a matter; and by the ways that be a passage to the soul (that is to say, the sight and the hearing) sendeth the looks of her eyes, the image of her countenance, and the voice of her words, that pierce into the lover's heart and give a witness of her love."

Messer Morello said: "Looks and words may be, and oftentimes are, false witnesses. Therefore whoso hath not a better pledge of love, in my judgment, he is in an ill assurance. And surely I looked still that you would have made this woman of yours somewhat more courteous and free toward the Courtier than my Lord Giuliano hath made his; but meseemeth you be both of the property of those judges that, to appear wise, give sentence against their own."

Bembo said: "I am well pleased to have this woman much more courteous toward my Courtier not young than Lord Giuliano's is to the young; and that with good reason, because mine coveteth but honest matters, and therefore may the woman grant him them all without blame. But my Lord Giuliano's woman, that is not so assured of the modesty of the young man, ought to grant him the honest matters only, and deny him the dishonest. Therefore more happy is mine, that hath granted him whatsoever he requireth, than the other, that hath part granted and part denied. And because you may moreover the better understand that reasonable love is more happy than sensual, I say unto you that selfsame things in sensual ought to be denied otherwhile, and in reasonable granted; because in the one they be honest, and in the other dishonest. Therefore the woman, to please her good lover, besides the granting him merry countenances, familiar and secret talk, jesting, dallying, hand-in-hand, may also lawfully and without blame come to kissing, which in sensual love, according to Lord Giuliano's rule, is not lawful. For since a kiss is a knitting together both of body and soul, it is to be feared lest the sensual lover will be more inclined to the part of the body than of the soul; but

the reasonable lover wotteth well that although the mouth be a parcel of the body, yet is it an issue for the words that be the interpreters of the soul, and for the inward breath, which is also called the soul; and therefore hath a delight to join his mouth with the woman's beloved with a kiss—not to stir him to any unhonest desire, but because he feeleth that that bond is the opening of an entry to the souls, which, drawn with a coveting the one of the other, pour themselves by turn the one into the other's body, and be so mingled together that each of them hath two souls, and one alone so framed of them both ruleth, in a manner, two bodies. Whereupon a kiss may be said to be rather a coupling together of the soul than of the body, because it hath such force in her that it draweth her unto it, and, as it were, separateth her from the body. For this do all chaste lovers covet a kiss as a coupling of souls together. And therefore Plato, the divine lover, saith that in kissing his soul came as far as his lips to depart out of the body. And because the separating of the soul from the matters of the sense, and the thorough coupling of her with matters of understanding, may be betokened by a kiss, Solomon saith in his heavenly book of ballads, 'Oh that he would kiss me with a kiss of his mouth', to express the desire he had that his soul might be ravished through heavenly love to the beholding of heavenly beauty in such manner that, coupling herself inwardly with it, she might forsake the body."

They stood all hearkening heedfully to Bembo's reasoning, and after he had stayed a while and saw that none spake, he said: "Since you have made me to begin to show our not young Courtier this happy love, I will lead him yet somewhat farther forward, because to

stand still at this stay were somewhat perilous for him, considering, as we have oftentimes said, the soul is most inclined to the senses, and for all reason with discourse chooseth well, and knoweth that beauty not to spring of the body, and therefore setteth a bridle to the unhonest desires, yet to behold it always in that body doth oftentimes corrupt the right judgment. And where no other inconvenience ensueth upon it, one's absence from the wight beloved carrieth a great passion with it; because the influence of that beauty when it is present giveth a wondrous delight to the lover, and, setting his heart on fire, quickeneth and melteth certain virtues in a trance and congealed in the soul, the which, nourished with the heat of love, flow about and go bubbling nigh the heart, and thrust out through the eyes those spirits which be most fine vapors made of the purest and clearest part of the blood, which receive the image of beauty and deck it with a thousand sundry furnitures. Whereupon the soul taketh a delight, and with a certain wonder is aghast, and yet enjoyeth she it, and, as it were, astonied together with the pleasure, feeleth the fear and reverence that men accustomably have toward holy matters, and thinketh herself to be in paradise. The lover, therefore, that considereth only the beauty in the body, loseth this treasure and happiness as soon as the woman beloved with her departure leaveth the eyes without their brightness, and consequently the soul, as a widow without her joy. For since beauty is far off, that influence of love setteth not the heart on fire, as it did in presence. Whereupon the pores be dried up and withered, and yet doth the remembrance of beauty somewhat stir those virtues of the soul in such wise that they seek to scatter abroad the spirits, and they,

finding the ways closed up, have no issue, and still they seek to get out, and so with those shootings enclosed, prick the soul and torment her bitterly, as young children, when in their tender gums they begin to breed teeth. And hence come the tears, sighs, vexations and torments of lovers; because the soul is always in affliction and travail and, in a manner, waxeth wood, until the beloved beauty cometh before her once again, and then she is immediately pacified and taketh breath, and, thoroughly bent to it, is nourished with most dainty food, and by her will would never depart from so sweet a sight. To avoid, therefore, the torment of this absence, and to enjoy beauty without passion, the Courtier by the help of reason must full and wholly call back again the coveting of the body to beauty alone, and, in what he can, behold it in itself simple and pure, and frame it within his imagination sundered from all matter, and so make it friendly and loving to his soul, and there enjoy it, and have it with him day and night, in every time and place, without mistrust ever to lose it; keeping always fast in mind that the body is a most diverse thing from beauty, and not only not increaseth but diminisheth the perfection of it. In this wise shall our not young Courtier be out of all bitterness and wretchedness that young men feel, in a manner continually, as jealousies, suspicions, disdains, angers, desperations, and certain rages full of madness, whereby many times they be led into so great error that some do not only beat the women whom they love, but rid themselves out of their life. He shall do no wrong to the husband, father, brethren or kinsfolk of the woman beloved. He shall not bring her in slander. He shall not be in case with much ado otherwhile to refrain his

eyes and tongue from discovering his desires to others. He shall not take thought at departure or in absence, because he shall evermore carry his precious treasure about with him shut fast within his heart. And besides, through the virtue of imagination, he shall fashion within himself that beauty much more fair than it is indeed. But among commodities the lover shall find another yet far greater, in case he will take this love for a stair, as it were, to climb up to another far higher than it. The which he shall bring to pass, if he will go and consider with himself what a strict bond it is to be always in the trouble to behold the beauty of one body alone. And therefore, to come out of this so narrow a room, he shall gather in his thoughts by little and little so many ornaments that mingling all beauties together he shall make a universal concept, and bring the multitude of them to the unity of one alone, that is generally spread over all the nature of man. And thus shall he behold no more the particular beauty of one woman, but a universal, that decketh out all bodies. Whereupon, being made dim with this greater light, he shall not pass upon the lesser, and, burning in a more excellent flame, he shall little esteem it that he set great store by at the first. This stair of love, though it be very noble and such as few arrive at it, yet is it not in this sort to be called perfect, forsomuch as where the imagination is of force to make conveyance and hath no knowledge but through those beginnings that the senses help her withal, she is not clean purged from gross darkness; and therefore, though she do consider that universal beauty in sunder and in itself alone, yet doth she not well and clearly discern it, nor without some doubtfulness, by reason of the agreement that the fancies have

with the body. Wherefore such as come to this love are like young birds almost flush, which for all they flutter a little their tender wings, yet dare they not stray far from the nest, nor commit themselves to the wind and open weather. When our Courtier, therefore, shall be come to this point, although he may be called a good and happy lover, in respect of them that be drowned in the misery of sensual love, yet will I not have him to set his heart at rest, but boldly proceed farther, following the highway after his guide, that leadeth him to the point of true happiness. And thus, instead of going out of his wit with thought, as he must do that will consider the bodily beauty, he may come into his wit to behold the beauty that is seen with the eyes of the mind, which then begin to be sharp and thorough seeing, when the eyes of the body lose the flower of their sightliness.

"Therefore the soul, rid of vices, purged with the studies of true philosophy, occupied in spiritual, and exercised in matters of understanding, turning her to the beholding of her own substance, as it were raised out of a most deep sleep, openeth the eyes that all men have and few occupy, and seeth in herself a shining beam of that light which is the true image of the angel-like beauty partened with her, whereof she also partneth with the body a feeble shadow; therefore, waxed blind about earthly matters, is made most quick of sight about heavenly. And otherwhile when the stirring virtues of the body are withdrawn alone through earnest beholding, either fast bound through sleep, when she is not hindered by them, she feeleth a certain privy smell of the right angel like beauty, and, ravished with the shining of that light, beginneth to be inflamed, and so greedily followeth after that in a manner she waxeth drunken

and beside herself, for coveting to couple herself with it, having found, to her weening, the footsteps of God, in the beholding of whom, as in her happy end, she seeketh to settle herself. And therefore, burning in this most happy flame, she ariseth to the noblest part of her, which is the understanding, and there, no more shadowed with the dark night of earthly matters, seeth the heavenly beauty; but yet doth she not for all that enjoy it altogether perfectly, because she beholdeth it only in her particular understanding, which can not conceive the passing great universal beauty; whereupon, not thoroughly satisfied with this benefit, love giveth unto the soul a greater happiness. For like as through the particular beauty of one body he guideth her to the universal beauty of all bodies, even so in the last degree of perfection through particular understanding he guideth her to the universal understanding. Thus the soul kindled in the most holy fire of heavenly love, fleeth to couple herself with the nature of angels, and not only clean forsaketh sense, but hath no more need of the discourse of reason, for, being changed into an angel, she understandeth all things that may be understood; and without any veil or cloud, she seeth the meine sea of the pure heavenly beauty, and receiveth it into her, and enjoyeth that sovereign happiness that can not be comprehended of the senses. Since, therefore, the beauties which we daily see with these our dim eyes in bodies subject to corruption, that nevertheless be nothing else but dreams and most thin shadows of beauty, seem unto us so wellfavored and comely that oftentimes they kindle in us a most burning fire, and with such delight that we reckon no happiness may be compared to it that we feel otherwhile through the only look which the beloved

countenance of a woman casteth at us. What happy wonder, what blessed abashment, may we reckon that to be that taketh the souls which come to have a sight of the heavenly beauty? What sweet flame, what sweet incense, may a man believe that to be which ariseth of the fountain of the sovereign and right beauty? Which is the origin of all other beauty, which never increaseth nor diminisheth, always beautiful, and of itself, as well on the one part as on the other, most simple, only like itself, and partner of none other, but in such wise beautiful that all other beautiful things be beautiful because they be partners of the beauty of it.

"This is the beauty unseparable from the high bounty which with her voice calleth and draweth to her all things; and not only to the endowed with understanding giveth understanding, to the reasonable reason, to the sensual sense and appetite to live, but also partaketh with plants and stones, as a print of herself, stirring, and the natural provocation of their properties. So much, therefore, is this love greater and happier than others as the cause that stirreth it is more excellent. And therefore, as common fire trieth gold and maketh it fine, so this most holy fire in souls destroyeth and consumeth whatsoever is mortal in them, and relieveth and maketh beautiful the heavenly part, which at the first by reason of the sense was dead and buried in them. This is the great fire in the which, the poets write, that Hercules was burned on the top of the mountain Oeta, and through that consuming with fire, after his death was holy and immortal. This is the fiery bush of Moses: the divided tongues of fire; the inflamed chariot of Elias: which doubleth grace and happiness in their souls that be worthy to see it, when they forsake this earthly base-

ness and flee up into heaven. Let us, therefore, bend all our force and thoughts of soul to this most holy light, which showeth us the way that leadeth to heaven; and after it, putting off the affections we were clad withal at our coming down, let us climb up the stairs which at the lowermost step have the shadow of sensual beauty, to the high mansion place where the heavenly, amiable, and right beauty dwelleth, which lieth hid in the innermost secrets of God, lest unhallowed eyes should come to the sight of it; and there shall we find a most happy end for our desires, true rest for our travails, certain remedy for miseries, a most healthful medicine for sickness, a most sure haven in the troublesome storms of the tempestuous sea of this life.

"What tongue mortal is there then, O most holy love, that can sufficiently praise thy worthiness? Thou most beautiful, most good, most wise, art derived of the unity of heavenly beauty, goodness, and wisdom, and therein dost thou abide, and unto it through it, as in a circle, turnest about. Thou the most sweet bond of the world, a mean betwixt heavenly and earthly things, with a bountiful temper bendest the high virtues to the government of the lower, and turning back the minds of mortal men to their beginning, couplest them with it. Thou with agreement bringest the elements in one, and stirrest nature to bring forth that which ariseth and is born for the succession of the life. Thou bringest severed matters into one, to the unperfect givest perfection, to the unlike likeness, to enmity amity, to the earth fruits, to the sea calmness, to the heaven lively light. Thou are the father of true pleasures, of grace, peace, lowliness, and good will, enemy to rude wildness and sluggishness—to be short, the beginning and end of all

goodness. And forsomuch as thou delightest to dwell in the flower of beautiful bodies and beautiful souls, I suppose that thy abiding-place is now here among us, and from above otherwhile showest thyself a little to the eyes and minds of them that be worthy to see thee. Therefore vouchsafe, Lord, to hearken to our prayers, pour Thyself into our hearts, and with the brightness of Thy most holy fire lighten our darkness, and, like a trusty guide in this blind maze, show us the right way; reform the falsehood of the senses, and after long wandering in vanity give us the right and sound joy. Make us to smell those spiritual savors that relieve the virtues of the understanding, and to hear the heavenly harmonies so tunable that no discord of passion take place any more in us. Make us drunken with the bottomless fountain of contentation that always doth delight and never giveth fill, and that giveth a smack of the right bliss unto whoso drinketh of the running and clear water thereof. Purge with the shining beams of thy light our eyes from misty ignorance, that they may no more set by mortal beauty, and well perceive that the things which at the first they thought themselves to see be not indeed, and those that they saw not to be in effect. Accept our souls that be offered unto thee for a sacrifice. Burn them in the lively flame that wasteth all gross filthiness, that after they be clean sundered from the body they may be coupled with an everlasting and most sweet bond to the heavenly beauty. And we, severed from ourselves, may be changed like right lovers into the beloved, and, after we be drawn from the earth, admitted to the feast of the angels, where, fed with immortal ambrosia and nectar, in the end we may die a most happy and lively death, as in times past died the

fathers of old time, whose souls with most fervent zeal of beholding thou didst hale from the body and coupledst them with God."

When Bembo had hitherto spoken with such vehemency that a man would have thought him, as it were, ravished and beside himself, he stood still without once moving, holding his eyes toward heaven as astonied, when the Lady Emilia, which together with the rest gave most diligent ear to this talk, took him by the plait of his garment and plucking him a little, said: "Take heed, Messer Pietro, that these thoughts make not your soul also to forsake the body."

"Madam," answered Messer Pietro, "it should not be by any mean the first miracle that love hath wrought in me."

Then the Duchess and all the rest began afresh to be instant upon Messer Bembo that he would proceed once more in his talk, and every one thought he felt in his mind, as it were, a certain sparkle of that godly love that pricked him, and they all coveted to hear farther; but Messer Bembo: "My Lords," quoth he, "I have spoken what the holy fury of love hath, unsought for, indited to me; now that, it seemeth, he inspireth me no more, I wot not what to say. And I think verily that love will not have his secrets discovered any farther, nor that the Courtier should pass the degree that his pleasure is I should show him, and therefore it is not perhaps lawful to speak any more in this matter."

"Surely," quoth the Duchess, "if the not young Courtier be such a one that he can follow this way which you have showed him, of right he ought to be satisfied with so great a happiness, and not to envy the younger."

Then the Lord Cesare Gonzaga: "The way," quoth

he, "that leadeth to this happiness is so steep, in my mind, that I believe it will be much ado to get to it."

The Lord Gaspar said: "I believe it be hard to get up for men, but unpossible for women."

The Lady Emilia laughed, and said: "If you fall so often to offend us, I promise you you shall be no more forgiven."

The Lord Gaspar answered: "It is no offense to you in saying that women's souls be not so purged from passions as men's be, nor accustomed in beholdings, as Messer Pietro hath said is necessary for them to be that will taste of the heavenly love. Therefore it is not read that ever woman hath had this grace; but many men have had it, as Plato, Socrates, Plotinus, and many other, and a number of our holy fathers, as Saint Francis, in whom a fervent spirit of love imprinted the most holy seal of the five wounds. And nothing but the virtue of love could hale up Saint Paul the Apostle to the sight of those secrets which is not lawful for man to speak of; nor show Saint Stephen the heavens open."

Here answered the Lord Giuliano: "In this point men shall nothing pass women, for Socrates himself doth confess that all the mysteries of love which he knew were oped unto him by a woman, which was Diotima. And the angel that with the fire of love imprinted the five wounds in Saint Francis, hath also made some women worthy of the same print in our age. You must remember, moreover, that Saint Mary Magdalen had many faults forgiven her, because she loved much; and perhaps with no less grace than Saint Paul was she many times through angelic love haled up to the third heaven. And many other, as I showed you yesterday more at large, that for love of the name of Christ have

not passed upon life, nor feared torments, nor any other kind of death how terrible and cruel ever it were. And they were not, as Messer Pietro will have his Courtier to be, aged, but soft and tender maidens, and in the age when he saith that sensual love ought to be borne withal in men."

The Lord Gaspar began to prepare himself to speak, but the Duchess: "Of this," quoth she, "let Messer Pietro be judge, and the matter shall stand to his verdict, whether women be not as meet for heavenly love as men. But because the plead between you may happen be too long, it shall not be amiss to defer it until to-morrow.

"Nay, to-night," quoth the Lord Cesare Gonzaga.

"And how can it be to-night?" quoth the Duchess.

The Lord Cesare answered: "Because it is day already," and showed her the light that began to enter in at the clefts of the windows. Then every man arose upon his feet with much wonder, because they had not thought that the reasonings had lasted longer than the accustomed wont, saving only that they were begun much later, and with their pleasantness had deceived so the Lords' minds that they wist not of the going away of the hours. And not one of them felt any heaviness of sleep in his eyes, the which often happeneth when a man is up after his accustomed hour to go to bed. When the windows then were opened on the side of the palace that hath his prospect toward the high top of Mount Catri, they saw already risen in the east a fair morning like unto the color of roses, and all stars voided, saving only the sweet governess of the heaven, Venus, which keepeth the bound of the night and the day, from which appeared to blow a sweet blast that, filling the air with

a biting cold, began to quicken the tunable notes of the pretty birds among the hushing woods of the hills at hand. Whereupon they all, taking their leave with reverence of the Duchess, departed toward their lodgings without torch, the light of the day sufficing.

And as they were now passing out at the great chamber door, the Lord General turned him to the Duchess and said: "Madam, to take up the variance between the Lord Gaspar and the Lord Giuliano, we will assemble this night with the judge sooner than we did yesterday."

The Lady Emilia answered: "Upon condition that in case my Lord Gaspar will accuse women, and give them, as his wont is, some false report, he will also put us in surety to stand to trial, for I reckon him a wavering starter."

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